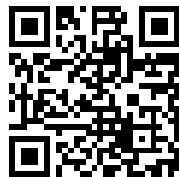


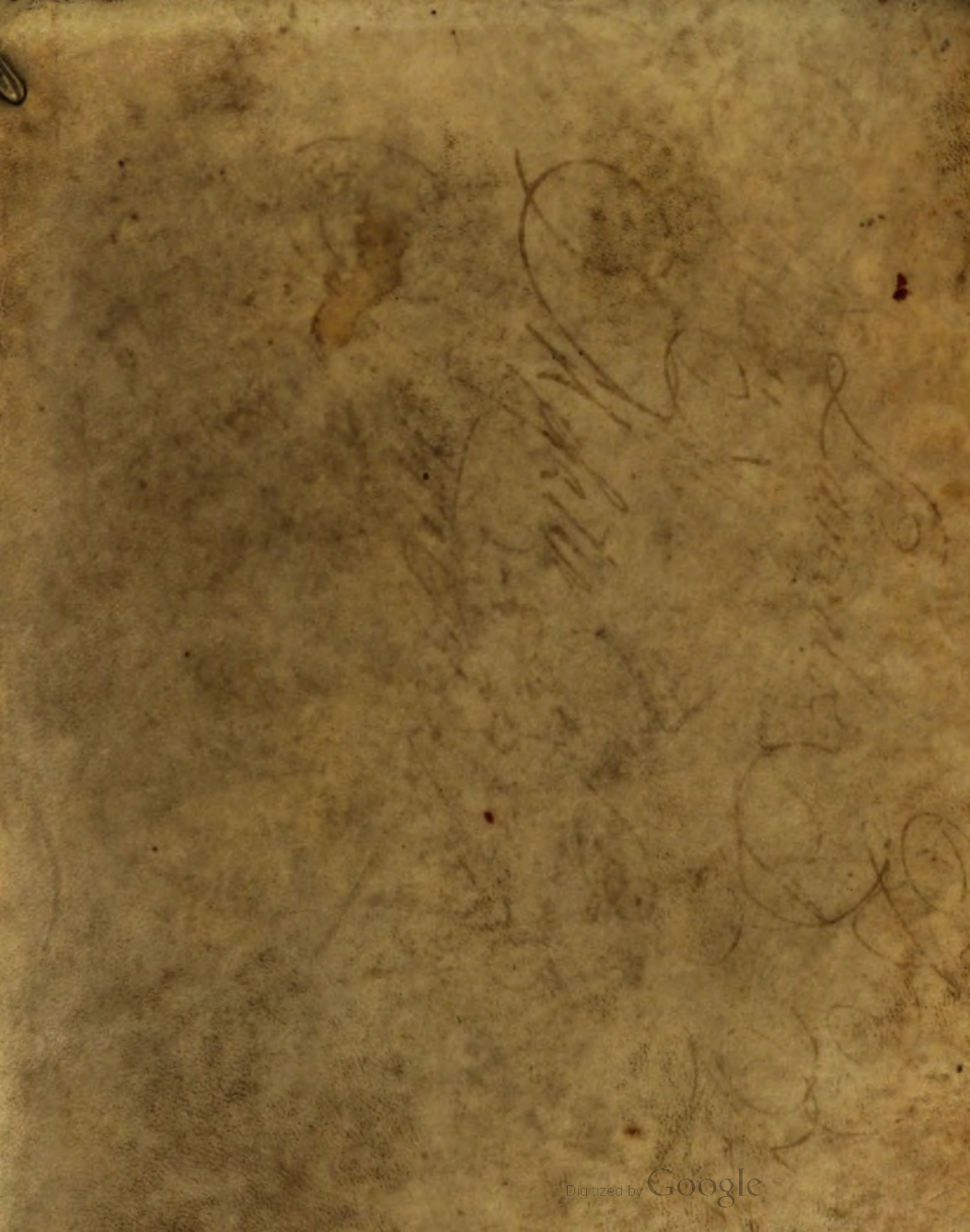
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Mus. 17. 1. 467

Dr Sisters This Booke is lent by  
H. Price for ye use of ye Sick &  
Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Al<sup>d</sup>s Desiers noe body will keep  
it longer then whilst they are using it  
and then bring it back to the sickhouse  
Refecory 1720









# AN ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS-CHRIST.

OR

## THE RULE OF THE FRIER-MINORS:

*Literally, Morally, and Spiritually expounded*  
By Brother JOHN BAPTIST WESTON.

---

A Work useful for all those, whether in the World  
or in Religion, that desire to follow our Saviour  
in the Narrow path of Mortification  
and Penance.

---

*Brethren, we are Debtors > Not to the Flesh, to live according  
to the Flesh. For if you Live according to the Flesh, you shall Die:  
But if by the Spirit you mortifie the deeds of the Flesh, you shall  
Live. Rom. 8, v. 12. 13.*

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Printed by JOHN TAVERNE.  
M. DCC. XXIII.

Mason A.A. 463.





TO  
THE SERAPHICAL FATHER.



*Great Patriarch of your Little , but  
Numerous Flock of Frier-Minors ,  
by the Divine favour multiplied and spread  
throughout the whole habitable World , and  
marvellously maintain'd. by a most special  
providence at the Heavenly Fathers own  
Table ! O humble Saint of God ! Behold  
me prostrate here before you , to offer up the  
homage of my Person and Books acknowledg-  
ing the Nothing both of the one and other ,  
and protesting to have no other Intention  
than to promote therein the pure and sincere  
Observance of your Divine Rule. Accord-  
ing to the Letter ; according to the Let-  
ter , according to the Letter : Without  
Gloss , without Gloss , without Gloss.*

Can



## THE PREFACE.



**H**ERE are Three things ( Courteous Reader ) which I desire to acquaint you with in the front of this Treatise , to prepare you for the better understanding of those Matters we shall hereafter speak of. One , is the Disposition and Order of the Rule we are about to expound. The other , a Summary or brief Collection of the Precepts contain'd therein , with its Counsels , Admonitions , Exhortations , and Liberties. And the third , the Method and Design of the whole Work.

I. As for what concerns the Disposition and Order of the Rule , be pleas'd to observe , that our holy Founder having divided it into Twelve Chapters , in manner of the Twelve Articles of the Apostles Creed , to be deliver'd to his *Seraphical* Order , which was to be spread over all the world ; or like a mystical Ladder fram'd of Twelve steps , by which we may ascend to Heaven ; or as so many solid Foundations , whereon to erect the Edifice of virtues ;

## T H E P R E F A C E.

or infine as Twelve stately Gates of the Celestial *Jerusalem*, through which we must pass to enjoy the glorious society of the Blessed : In the first, he begins with the three essential vows of a Religious State in general, as they have regard to the observation of the holy Gospel. Then he establishes the *Hierarchy* of his Order, by a due dependance and subordination between the Head and the Members; enjoining us Reverence and Obedience, first to the supream visible head of the *Roman-Catholick Church* the Pope's Holiness, secondly to one chief General and Superiour of the whole Fraternity.

In the second Chapter, he gives Directions for furnishing his Order with Members, desirous to propagate it through the world, for the honour of God and the gaining of Souls. Wherein are contain'd many obligations under Sin, touching the Reception, Examination, and Qualification of Novices, the Distribution of their goods to the Poor, their Probation and Profession, Clothes for them and the profess'd Brethren, the Number of their Habits, their Courseness and Patching, and their going Barefoot. And then concludes this Chapter with an Admonition to his Brethren, not to judge, nor despise those whom they see cloth'd in soft and colour'd Garments, and feed on delicate Meats and Drinks, but rather that every one judge, and despise Himself.

In the third, he disposes what relates to the Divine Service, and to works of Piety; delivering  
precepts

## **T H E P R E F A C E.**

precepts concerning Prayer both for Clerks and Lay-brothers, and prescribing several Fasts of obligation. Then shuts up the Chapter with Instructions how his Brethren are to behave themselves when they Travel, without Riding; exhorting them not to contend with words, nor judge others; but to be Meek, Peaceable, Modest, Mild, Humble, and to speak Handsomly to every body, as becomes Apostolical men and professors of the Gospel; That they salute the House into which they enter, and freely eat what they there find.

In the subsequent Chapters of his Rule, he treats of the three essential vows of Religion distinctly, and as peculiar to his own Fraternity of *Frier-Minors*. And first of holy *Poverty*, the darling Virtue and Mistress of his Order, in the IV. V. VI. Chapters; where he forbids us all use and administration of Money, and the propriety of all Temporal things both in Common and in Particular, all things Curious, Precious, and Superfluous, or which relish of the spirit of Hording, confining us to mean Diet, coarse Apparel, and to a Moderate use of what ever is necessary for the life of Man. Then exhorts his Brethren to shun Idleness as the greatest enemy of man's Salvation; to work with their Hands, and love one another, and to have a special care not to extinguish the spirit of Devotion and Prayer; and commands them to take care of their Sick. And lest he should seem by his extream Poverty to tempt the  
the



## T H E P R E F A C E.

the Divine providence , he here likewise as a pious and discreet Father appoints us four convenient Means whereby to subsist , conformable to the Gospel , towit , by receiving Alms freely offer'd , by Working , by Begging , and by having recourse to Spiritual Friends.

As to the vow of *Obedience* , and what concerns Superiours and Inferiours ; such as are Chapters , Elections , Reserv'd cases , Visitations , Admonitions , Corrections , &c. he gives precepts for all these in the VII. VIII. X. Chapters. And concludes them with an exhortation to beware of Anger , Trouble of mind , Pride , Vain-glory , Covetousness , Detraction , and Murmuring ; To pray with a pure heart ; To have Humility , and Patience in afflictions ; To love our Enemies ; And to prefer the Spirit of our Lord , and his holy Operation before Learning and all things whatever , as the only scope and design of his whole Rule.

Of *Chastity* he treats in the XI. Chapter , where he forbids us all Suspected company of women , the going into Monasteries , and being God-fathers ; taking from us by these means all familiarity with the Sex , which may occasion our trespassing against this Vow. And because his Institute by the worlds Saviour was design'd for the benefit of all Mankind , the two remaining Chapters , viz. IX. and XII. are of Preachers , Confessors , and Missioners , for the conversion of Sinners and Infidels. Whereto the  
two

## THE PREFACE.

two principal virtues of our Profession, namely Poverty and Humility do marvellously contribute. For by means of the first, we have a free and most easy access to Sinners; our intire Abdication of the world, and Contempt of all temporal things throughly convincing them that ~~we~~ we seek not theirs, but the things of *Jesus-Christ*, and their eternal Salvation; which gains us credit and authority, and raises the Peoples admiration, and is the cause they esteem as Oracles of truth what comes from the mouths of Persons so little interess'd for this World. And on the other side, our Humility, Meekness, and Simplicity have a strange power over all arrogant and proud Spirits, and by an admirable *Metamorphosis* of Wolves transform them into Lambs, captivating the most savage and fiercest of Mortals.

II. As for what relates to the Summary, that my Reader may readily with one glance of his eye behold all together the Obligations which our holy Founder imposes upon his Followers, I have here collected and reduc'd them to the number of 25. It is true that the common way of reckoning these Precepts, is by dividing them into 7 *Formal* ones, 2 *Inhibitory*, 4 that have the *Virtue* of precepts, and 12 *Equivalent* to precepts. But we in this place as most commodious follow the course and order of the Chapters, taking them as they ly couch'd in the Rule, and intermixt one with the other; by which means you may more easily have recourse to them

## THE PREFACE.

them in the text, and to their Explication. By *Formal* precepts we understand such as are express'd, except that of the first Chapter, by terms of formal Command, as I strictly injoin, I command under obedience. By *Inhibitory*, such as are express'd by terms of Prohibition, as nothing, not, by no means. Those that have the *Vertue* of precepts, by the words bound, oblig'd. And the *Equivalent* to precepts commonly by verbs of the Imperative mood. Not that all Imperatives denote such, but only those which Clem. V. has expressly declar'd to be such. So that these Precepts differ from one another, not in the Substance of their obligation, for they all in a weighty matter oblige under Mortal sin, but in the Manner of imposing the obligation or the Form of wording the precept: In which sense some are called Formal, others Virtual, others Inhibitory, and the rest Equipollents.

But before I give in the List of them, take notice that other Religious Orders (except their three essential vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience obliging them under Mortal sin) are govern'd as to other particular points of their Institutes by Temporal punishments, and kept to their duty by Corrections to be inflict'd upon those that transgress them, without any tie of Conscience obliging them thereto. But this would not suffice the zeal of our *Seraphical* Father, all inflam'd with the love of God, who unwilling to leave his Children so much to their  
OWN

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own liberty , and to the weakness and instability of Man's wavering mind , for fear of falling has made use of the authority of a Founder , and inspir'd by God has establish'd the chief articles of his Rule under so many precepts of Obligation , and the pain of eternal Damnation ; as a more sure and effectual means to preserve the purity of that Evangelical Rule , which he had receiv'd upon the holy mountain of *Palumba* from the hands of the world's Redeemer. For who sees not that the fear of offending a God , and incurring thereby everlasting Death , is beyond comparison a much more forcible Bridle to keep us within the bounds of Duty , than the fear of Man , or of any Temporal punishment whatever ? So that by this expedient our holy Founder has put us under a happy Necessity , compelling us to advance on the way of religious Perfection by the fear of God's Anger and the bond of Conscience ; which cannot dissemble , nor flatter us in our crimes , and have Eyes and Ears to keep us in awe where Superiours many times have none. And this was necessary in our Case more particularly than in other Institutes ; because the Rule of *Frier-Minors* being the strictest and most hard to be kept of any in the Catholick Church , stood in need of some severer Bit and more forcible Tie to bind us to the Observation thereof.

It is moreover to be observ'd concerning these Precepts , that all Relaxations , Dispensations , Privileges ,

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vileges, Exemptions, formerly granted by the Apostolical See, contrary to our holy Rule, and the Declarations of *Nic. III.* and *Clem. V.* are recall'd, made void, and annull'd. So that no *Frier-Minor* professing the Rule of *S. Francis* confirm'd by *Honorius III.* can now with a safe conscience lay claim to any such Privilege, or Dispensation; but is strictly oblig'd purely, simply, and literally to observe the said Rule and every one of its Precepts. As appears by the Bulls of *Urb. VIII.* 1625. *Innoc. XI.* 1676. *Innoc. XII.* 1695. And by the General Chapters of the Order, as *Tolet.* 1606. *Rom.* 1612. And lastly by our General Statutes c. 5. p. 10. where all and every one of the Brethren are Commanded to live up to the purity of the Rule, and laying aside all Dispensations, faithfully to accomplish their Vows made to the Best and Greatest God. These things being observ'd, the Catalogue of them follows after this manner.

### The Precepts of the Rule.

CHAP. I. *Brother Francis promises Obedience and Reverence to our Lord Honorius the Pope, and to his Successors canonically elected, and to the Roman Church. Form.*

CHAP. II. *The Conditions which are put in the Rule concerning the Habit of the Novices, and the manner of their Reception and Profession, are all Obligatory. Equip.*

*By no means shall it be lawful for the Brethren to go out of this Religion. Inhib.*

*They*



## T H E P R E F A C E.

*They that have promis'd Obedience, let them have one Tunick with a Capuce, and another without a Capuce. Equip.*

*They that are forc'd by Necessity, may wear Shooes. Equip.*

*Let all the Brethren be clad in Course garments. Equip.*

CHAP. III. *Let the Clerks make the Divine Office according to the order of the holy Roman Church: And let the Lay-brothers say the Pater-noster. Equip.*

*Let the Brethren fast from All-Saints to the Nativity of our Lord, and the Lent of the Resurrection, and upon all Fridays. Equip.*

*They ought not to ride on Horse-back, unless forc'd by a manifest Necessity, or Infirmitie. Equip.*

CHAP. IV. *I strictly command all the Brethren that by no means they receive any Coin or Money. Form.*

*Let the Ministers and Custodes only have a diligent care for the Necessities of the Sick, and for Clathing the Brethren. Equip.*

CHAP. VI. *Let the Brethren appropriate Nothing to themselves. Inhib.*

*If any of them shall fall Sick, the other Brethren ought to serve him, as they Themselves would be serv'd. Equip.*

CHAP. VII. *The Brethren are bound to have recourse to their Provincial Ministers for Reserv'd Cases. Vert.*

CHAP. VIII. *The Brethren are bound to have always one of the Brethren of this Religion for their General Minister. Vert.*

*The Ministers and Custodes are bound to meet together at the Chapter of Pentecost, for the election of a Successor of the General Minister. Vert.*

If

## THE PREFACE.

If at any time it should seem to the generality of the said Ministers and Custodes, that the General Minister suffice not for the service and common profit of the Brethren, they are bound to chuse another. *Vert.*

CHAR. IX. Let not the Brethren preach in the Diocess of any Bishop, when by him it shall be forbidden them. *Equip.*

Let no Brother presume upon any account to preach to the People, unless he be Examind, and Approv'd by the General Minister. *Equip.*

CHAP. X. I strictly command them to obey their Ministers in all things which they have promis'd our Lord to observe. *Form.*

If they cannot Spiritually observe the Rule, they may, and ought to have recourse to their Ministers. *Equip.*

CHAP. XI. I strictly command them all, that they have no Suspected company or counsel with Women. *Form.*

That they enter not into the Monasteries of Nuns. *Form.*

That they be not God-fathers of Men or Women. *Form.*

CHAP. XII. I injoin the Ministers under Obedience, that they ask of the Pope one of the Cardinals of the holy Roman Church, for Governour, Protector, and Corrector of this Fraternity. *Form.*

Those that here follow are the Counsels, Exhortations, or Admonitions of our holy Rule, which no otherwise oblige us under Sin, than as impos'd by some other precept, Humane, Natural, or Divine, as severall of them are.

The

# THE PREFACE.

## The Counsels of the Rule.

CHAP. II. *That the Brethren do not judge, nor despise those People they see cloth'd in soft and colour'd Garments, and feed on delicate Meats and Drinks; but rather that every one judge, and despise Himself.*

CHAP. III. *That when they Travel through the World, they do not strive or contend with Words; but be Meek, Peaceable, Modest, Mild, and Humble, speaking handsomely to every body.*

*That into whatever House they shall enter, they first say, Peace be to this House.*

CHAP. V. *That those Brethren, to whom God has given the grace to labour, do labour Faithfully, and Devoutly.*

CHAP. VI. *That they go confidently for Alms.*

*That they intirely rely upon the height of their most high Poverty, never desiring to have any thing under Heaven for the Name of our Lord Jesus-Christ.*

*That they shew themselves one towards the other as Domesicks, and securely manifest to each other their Necessities.*

CHAP. VII. *That the Ministers injoin their Brethren penance with Mercy.*

*That they be not Angry, nor Troubl'd for the Sin of any one.*

CHAP. IX. *That in Preaching their Words be Examin'd, and Chast, to the profit and edification of the People, declaring to them Vice and Vertue, Pain and Glory, with Brevity of speech.*

C

CHAP. X

# THE PREFACE.

CHAP. X. That the Ministers Visit, and Admonish their Brethren, humbly and charitably Correct them, and Command them nothing that is against their Soul and our Rule.

That the Brethren which are Subjects remember that for God they have deny'd their own Wills.

That the Brethren shew need of Pride, Vainglory, Envy, Covetousness, Care of this World, of Detraction, and Murmuring.

That they who are ignorant of Learning let them not care to learn.

That they desire above all things to have the Spirit of our Lord, and his holy Operation: To Pray with a pure Heart: To have Humility, and Patience in persecution and infirmity: To love their Enemies, and pray for their Persecutors.

## The Liberties of the Rule.

CHAP. II. The Brethren may wear their Garments with Sack-cloth and other pieces.

CHAP. III. They that will fast the Week of the Epiphany, be they Blessed of our Lord; and they that will not, let them not be Oblig'd.

In time of manifest Necessity the Brethren shall not be bound to Corporal fast.

They may eat of all Meats that are set before them.

CHAP. VIII. The Ministers may Excommunicate, if they please, any in their Castles call their Brethren so Chapter.

CHAP. XII. Whosoever of the Brethren, by divine Inspiration,

## THE PREFACE.

*Inspiration, shall be willing to go among Saracens and other Infidels, let them ask leave of their Provincial Ministers.*

III. Now as for what touches the Design of this Work, in the first place ( Gentle Reader ) here take notice, that I intitle it *An Abstract of the Doctrine of Jesus - Christ* : As well in regard our Seraphical Rule ( the Subject of my Book ) is a true *Epitome* of that divine Doctrine deliver'd by our heavenly Master in the holy Gospel : As also for that Itself is an Abridgment of Christian Perfection ; the principal Maximes whereof are here succinctly handl'd in a plain familiar way, to render them the more easy and delightful.

Note again, I say in the Title-page, *A Work useful for all those that desire to follow our Saviour in the Narrow path of Mortification and Penance.* For they will here find markt out for them the Strait way of the Gospel that leads to Life, opposite to the Broad way that leads to Perdition : Or which is the same thing, they will here see painted in most lively colours a Mortify'd Religious man, as distinguish'd from a Libertine or Sensual man, according to the two following Characters ; which are as a Scantling or short Draught of my whole Treatise, which has for its Design no other than to set in full light before you a true Frier-Minor, or a Mortify'd Religious man in the strictest and most perfect way



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way of Christianity. To which the Libertine or Carnal man is diametrically opposite, as the Broad way is to the Narrow, wherein these two Persons differently walk, and steer their Course one towards Heaven, the other towards Hell.

### The Character of a Mortify'd Man.

*The Mortify'd Man, according to the Narrow way of the Gospel, is properly he, who treads in the paths which the Saviour of the world trac'd out to us by his Example, who fears not the Adversities which he most courageously indur'd, who believes what he taught, who do's what he did, who hopes what he promis'd, and follows where he led the way.*

*This is he, who meditates how to satisfy Reason, not Sensuality; who more willingly acts what may edify, than delight; who rebates the point of Carnal desires by Spiritual pleasures; who subjects the Flesh to the Spirit; who will do all which he will according to the rules of God, and his Superiour. He never slanders; he never despises any man but himself; he knows not what it is to malign the Prosperous, to persecute the Miserable, to court the Rich, to seek out his proper Interests, to sooth his Senses, to content his Curiosity, nor to entertain his Pleasures.*

*He is neither puff'd up with Pride, nor precipitated by Ambition, tickl'd by Vain-glory, nor inflam'd with desire of Honour; nor over-born with Delights, nor gnawn by Hatred, nor troubl'd with Contentions, nor terrify'd by Force, nor softn'd by Pleasure. Boldness makes him not impudent, Iniquity unjust, Obstinacy of heart untractable, Inconstancy variable, Rigor opinionated, Fury witless, Gourmandize*

## THE PREFACE.

*mandize curious, Disobedience rebellions, Vanity a vananter, Infidelity treacherous, Easiness of nature sickle, Cruelty harsh, Perverseness jealous, Revenge choleric, nor Malignity inurious.*

*His whole Life is admirably interlac'd between Action and Contemplation, which make on earth a figure of Angels ascending and descending, giving us in this life already a taste of the benefits, which we hope in the other. Active life makes him profit in the world, Contemplative shows him the way how he may surmount the world. The one goes to it by degrees, the other flies to the top; the one makes him holy, the other perfect; the one causes him to pardon injuries, the other places him beyond the sense of an injury; the one teaches him to mortify passions, the other establishes him in the Empire over all passions; the one gives succour to the afflicted by his means, and the other makes him voluntarily to afflict himself in the imitation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ; the one hastens to a Neighbour, and the other abides in God; the one has exercise, the other joy; the one conquers, the other possesses; the one knocks at the door, the other enters in; the one despises the world, the other enjoys God.*

*Finally, the Mortify'd Man, is a man covetous of Eternity, prodigal of Life, little careful of the Present, certain of the Future. A man, who seems no longer to have any commerce with the World, and who has nothing so familiar as a Life that is as it were buried in Death. Who flies above Sepulchres like an Angel, who holds not of the Earth but by the slender root of natural Necessities, and already touches Heaven with a finger. A man, who is as yet in Flesh, though he has made an eternal divorce with Flesh; who is under-foot to all the world by Humility, and above all the greatness thereof by Contempt of it; who binds himself, to*  
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## THE PREFACE.

*be at Liberty, who crucifies himself, to Combat; who mortifies himself, to be the more Vigorous; who withers, to flourish again; and daily dies, that he may never die.*

### The Character of a Libertine.

*This is a man, who lives according to Man, that is to say, according to himself, who applies all to himself; and makes of himself his Scope, his End, his Divinity. A man, who prefers in all things this world before the other, time before eternity, and the body before the soul. He believes what he pleases; his articles of Faith (if he has any) being of his own coining, according to the Caprichio's of his presumptuous Spirit, enamour'd of his own conceits. He lives under no discipline, government or command; he goes whither he lists; he converses by humour and fancy; he sleeps when he will, and as much as he will; he eats, and drinks, and laughs without rule, or measure; he speaks without discretion, or reservation. All that which is sweet to the Smelling, soft in Touching, pleasing to the Eye, delicate to the Taste, charming to the Ear, seems to be created for him. He passionately seeks after it, and has no other law in his Passions, but the power of his brutishness, nor makes any distinction of things permitted and prohibited in the licence of all pleasures. In a word, he cannot understand any felicity, unless it be in the Back and Belly, and all that which is common to us with Beasts.*

*He is a man bold, arrogant, haughty, proud, ambitious, impudent, unmerciful, unjust, hard-hearted, untractable, inconstant, fickle, contentious, opiniatre, witless, curious, rebellious, disobedient; a Liar, a Swearer, a Drunkard, a Fornicator, a Blasphemer, a Scoffer, a Vaunter; cruel, harsh*

## THE PREFACE.

harsh, treacherous, jealous, cholerick, revengeful, malignant, ungrateful, ill-condition'd, greedy, covetous, and a great admiror and lover of himself.

All Spiritual actions are baseful to him. His Soul, after it has lost the good for which we were made, wanders at random in the vast emptiness of Creatures, and issues out by the gates of all the Senses, to glut its Concupiscence. If it happen he be depriv'd the contentments he pursues (as oftentimes the divine Providence frames obstacles enough against his depraved desires) he entertains himself with the Idea of his pleasures, that he may leave nothing in his Soul untainted. He makes his Memory guilty by the representation of his past Lust; he hears without Voice, he smells without Odour, he tastes without Relish, he sees without Colours, he touches without Body, and creates Imaginary sins to gain Real torments.

His ordinary Entertainments are Masks, Balls, Comedies, Cards and Dice, or Love: All Women, who have made any impression upon his thoughts, are continually remember'd in his discourse: One in his opinion is fair, and another courtseous; one is rude, and another wily; this is plain, and that painted; behaviour is graceful in this, discourse in that.

To conclude, his beloved Ditty, which perpetually he has in his mouth, is that, which Epicures and Atheists sing in the book of Wisdom.

Come let us enjoy present blessings, and let us not torment our minds with the time to come. Let us make much of Creatures while they are in our power; let us take Prosperity by the wing whilst Youth smiles on us. Let us spare neither rich Wines, nor perfumes; the flower of Time flies away, lay hold of it who can. Let us make coronets of Roses before they wither; and let there not be a Meadow, wherein our Sensuality wantonly sports not. Let none of us be exempted from Riot; every where let us leave signs of Joy; because this is our portion and this our lot. For little, and with tediousness is the time

Sap. 2.

## THE PREFACE.

time of our Life ; and in the end of a Man there is no recovery, and there is none known that has return'd from Hell : Because of nothing we were born, and after this, we shall be as if we had not been : Because the Breath is a smoke in our Nostrils, and Speech a spark to move our Heart. Which being extinguish'd our Body shall be ashes, and the Spirit shall be pour'd abroad as soft Air, and our Life shall pass as the trace of a Cloud, and shall be dissolv'd as a Mist, which is driven away by the beams of the Sun, and oppress'd with the heat thereof : And our Name in time shall be forgotten, and no man shall have remembrance of our works. For our Time is the passing of a Shadow, and there is no return of our End : because it is seal'd, and no man returns. Come therefore, and let us enjoy present blessings &c.

Behold here ( dear Reader ) two Characters very different from one another, and two Ways wholly opposite ! Which of these two now will you chuse, you who believe there is another Life, and that you have an immortal Soul to be sav'd or damn'd, to be happy or miserable, to live in the delights of Paradise, or in the torments of Hell for all eternity ? You will enter into Religion without doubt, and to endeavour to secure your Salvation. Or else remaining in the World, strive to follow your Saviour as near as your Calling will permit, in the Narrow path of Mortification, as the Motives for it are most inviting. Which I hope to make appear in the sequel of this Treatise, for the comfort of all such as shall imbrace a Penitential state, whether in Religion or in the World. So to encourage them to enter by the Strait gate ; *Because broad is the gate, and large is the way that leads to Perdition, and many there are that enter by it : But narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leads to Life, and few there are that find it.*

Math. 7. 13.

As for the Method of my Book, in the first place  
I set.

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I set the Text of the Rule, then its Exposition, and at the head of the Exposition of each Chapter I place the Argument or chief Contents thereof, divided into Paragraphs; to which without any trouble you may have recourse, and so readily find what you want in the Exposition. As to the Exposition itself, I have every where follow'd the sentiments of the Ancient Fathers and Expositors of our Rule, not presuming to advance any thing of my own, but grounding all I have said after their Examples, upon these four *Bases*, to wit, the Simplicity of the letter of the Text; the Intention of the Founder; the Conformity of the Text with the Scripture; and with the Practice of *Christ* and his Apostles. And to shew this Conformity, I have all along in the Margin placed sentences of holy Scripture over against each Text. Behold the Foundations upon which I have erected my Fabrick. And to excite my Readers gust, and whet his devotion in the reading of it, (which is the principal thing I aim at throughout the whole Treatise, as sutable to the spirit of my holy Founder, who makes much greater reckoning of Piety than of Learning) I have taken care to interlace at the end of the Morals upon every Text, certain Aspirations or pious Affections, which are flaming transportations of the Will, bent to pursue and imbrace the Good discover'd, or to fly the Evil.

For the rest, my Reader must not expect here to find any New things which he may not meet with  
in

## T H E P R E F A C E.

in other Authors , from whence for the most part they are drawn , and whereof our *Seraphical Order* has already both the knowledge and practice. But what I propose to myself chiefly in this Work , is to refresh the memory of my Brethren of those things which they already know , and to excite in them those sparks of Devotion that lie hid in their pious and well dispos'd breasts , by presenting them with a compendious draught of all their Obligations, together with some Motives proper to animate them to the performance thereof ; for fear lest humane Frailty , which daily carries us to relent in our Duties , may cause us also to forget them , and so come by degrees to make us quite lose the Practice. For which reason I have touch'd , as clearly and briefly as I was able , such things as are most essential and common to our Profession ; to the end they may serve us for a Looking-glass , which we may Daily consult. Not as that Man in S. James , *who beholding the countenance of his Nativity in a Glass , consider'd himself , and went his way , and by and by forgot what an one he was.* But by often looking in it , to correct our Imperfections , and adorn our Souls after the most becoming manner , to render them thereby pleasing to God.

Jac. 1. 23.

O Word Incarnate , supream Intelligence , issued from the sacred Bosom of the most high Celestial Father ! O undrainable Fountain of all knowledge ! Graciously vouchsafe to bestow on me your unworthy Servant , here humbly prostrate before your divine Majesty , one little beam of your heavenly Light , that I may successfully compleat this Design to your Honour and Glory , and my Readers eternal Salvation.

FA-

## FACULTAS COMMISSARII GENERALIS.

**T**raſactum intitulum, *Expoſitio Litteralis, Moralis, & Spiritualis in Regulam Fratrum-Minorum* : à R. P. F. JOANNE BAPTISTA WESTON Cuſtode Cuſtodum Almæ Provinciæ noſtræ Angliæ, diligentiffimè elaboratum, doctrina, pietate, utilitate conſpicuum, noſtræque Regulæ accommodatiſſimum, præmiſſis à S. Concilio Trid. & Statutis Ordinis noſtri prærequiſitis, digniſſimum typis cenſeo, & ad id licentiam concedo. Datum in Conventu noſtro FF Min. Recoll. S. Mariæ de Angelis Brule 29. Septembris 1716. ſub noſtro Chirographo, officiique Sigillo minori.

F. RAPHAEL DE COLOMBS S.T.L.E. Provincia Colonienſis Ex-provincialis & Pater perpetuus, ac Super Provincias Germano-Belgicas, & annexas, Commiſſarius Generalis.

## Approbationes Theologorum Ordinis.

**I**nſcriptus ex Mandato Reverend. mi P. F. RAPHAELIS DE COLOMBS S. Theol. Lectoris Emeriti, Almæ Provinciæ Colonienſis Ex-provincialis, & Super Provincias Germano-Belgicas Commiſſarii Generalis, accuratè relegi, non ſine ſumma animi delectatione, Traſactum intitulum, *Expoſitio Litteralis, Moralis, & Spiritualis in Regulam Fratrum-Minorum* : à R. P. F. JOANNE BAPTISTA WESTON Cuſtode Cuſtodum Almæ Provinciæ Angliæ compoſitum : In quo nihil reperi Fidei orthodoxæ, aut bonis Moribus contrarium : Quin potiùs omnia in eo contenta, tantà ſunt eruditione, tantà pietate referta, tam clarà tamque Seraphicà methodo diſpoſita, ut Seraphicæ Regulæ excellentia, puritas, perfectio, ac maxima cum Evangelio conformitas manifeſtè ſe prodant; ut mirè alliciat non tantùm Divi. Franciſci filios, ſed etiam quoscumque ad vitam juxta normam veræ Sanctitatis inſtituendam. Hinc digniſſimum judico, ut publicà luce fruatur. Datum Duaci in Conventu noſtro FF. Minorum Recolletorum Anglorum die prima Auguſti 1716.

F. BRUNO CANTRILL

S. Theol. Lect. ſubſtitutus.

**L**iber cui Titulus : *Expoſitio-Litteralis, Moralis, & Spiritualis in Regulam Fratrum-Minorum* : à R. P. F. JOANNE BAPTISTA WESTON Almæ Provinciæ Angliæ Cuſtode Cuſtodum elucubratus, germanum exhibet Seraphicæ Regulæ Senſum & Spiritum; illuminans Intellectum ad ſcrutandum Corticem ſymul & Medullam legis Franciſcane, Affectumque inflammans in ejus viridem Obſervantiam



tiam. In eo siquidem pia Authoris industria præcipuè collimat, ut ex selectioribus tum Sacræ Paginæ, tum Sanctorum Patrum, saniorumque Regulæ Interpretum rudibus, atque ex interjectis ferventiorum animi motuum Scintillis, per considerationes Seraphicas subindè excitatis, Filium efformet Seraphici Patris verè Seraphicum. Ex eo discant Franciscani, Superiores pariter & Subditi, *Stare firmiter in Testamento suo, & in eo sobrie & lapidè colloqui, & in opere Mandatorum suorum feliciter tandem veterascere.* Ecclii 11. 21. Discant & alii Quicumque, solidæ ac defæcationis Pietatis amantes, *dignè ambulare vocatione qua vocati sunt.* Ephel. 4. 1. Nihil præterea continet quod Fidei & Moribus non sit apprimè consonum. Unde luce publica censeo quàm dignissimum. Datum Duaci inConventu nostro FF.Min.Recoli.Angl.hac dies 2. Maii 1716.  
F. FRANCISCUS KEARNT S.Theol.Lector.

### CENSURA ORDINARII.

**V**lris Facultate Reverendissimi Patris Commissarii Generalis Nationis Germano-Belgicæ, & Approbationibus duorum Lectorum ejusdem Ordinis circa Opus Anglicè scriptum, cui titulus: *Expositio Litteralis, Moralis, & Spiritualis in Regulam Fratrum-Minorum*, à R. P. F. JOANNE BAPTISTA WESTON &c. concedo, quantum in me est, ut illud Opus imprimatur, suppositis supponendis. Datum Duaci 9. Maii 1717.

A. DELCOURT S.Th. Doctor, & Professor  
Regius, nec non Librorum Censor.

### E R R A T A.

Pag.	Lin.	Fault.	Correct.	Pag.	Lin.	Fault.	Correct.
1.	ult.	Summ.	Sum.	71.	32.	robb.	rob.
4.	ult.	smal.	small.	75.	13.	Drawyers.	Drawers.
7.	tit.	Rule.	Life.	77.	10.	negecting.	neglecting.
12.	tit.	§ I. Their Rule.		96.	22.	humiell.	himself.
		§ II. Their Life.		102.	5.	shodd.	shod.
13.	tit.	Rule.	Name.	301.	ult.	peak.	speak.
14.	33.	ad.	and.	360.	32.	most.	must.
15.	tit.	§ II. Their Rule.		382.	9.	Visiter.	Visitor.
		§ III. Their Name.		388.	3.	follow it.	follow.
16.	30.	Carriers.	Carreers.	482.	7.	icence.	Licence.
27.	19.	syilver.	silver.	528.	14.	whe.	when.
33.	22.	thyn.	thine.	531.	31.	ngoirohn.	nothing of.
66.	27.	Manger.	Manger.	531.	32.	mort.	more.
72.	7.	de barr.	debar.	553.	17.	ye.	Eye

*The rest the Reader will please to correct.*

In the Name of our Lord begins the Rule  
and Life of the Frier-Minors.

## CHAP. I.

*THIS is the Rule, and Life of the Frier-Minors: To wit, to Observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord JESUS-CHRIST, Living in Obedience, without Propriety, and in Chastity. Brother Francis promises Obedience, and Reverence to our Lord Honorius the Pope, and to his Successors Canonically Elected, and to the Roman Church. And the Other Brethren are bound to Obey Brother Francis, and his Successors.*

## THE CONTENTS.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| I. The Excellency of the Rule of the Frier-Minors. | VI. The Happiness of their State                      |
| II. Their Life,                                    | VII. Their Obedience to the Pope.                     |
| III. Their Name.                                   | VIII. Their Obedience to the General.                 |
| IV. Their Profession of the Holy Gospel.           | IX. The Hierarchy of their Order wherein it Consists. |
| V. Their Vows.                                     |   |

## THE EXPOSITION.

*S. I. [His is the Rule.] The Form of Celestial Doctrine, Inspir'd by the Holy Ghost unto S. Francis and his Followers: The Hope of Salvation, the Key of Paradise, the Everlasting Covenant, the Pledge of Beatitude, the High-way of the Cross, the Marrow of the Gospel, the Summ of Christian Perfection, the Book of Life;*

*Encomiums of the Rule of S. Francis. Clem. V. Exiit de Paradiso in Prologo. Barth. Pisan. l. i. Conform. c. 9.*

A

De-f.

*N. c. III. Exiit  
qui Seminat  
in Prologo.*

*Whofoever  
shall foliow  
this Rule ;  
Peace be upon  
them, and  
Mercy. Gal. 6.  
16.*

*Alv. Pelag. de  
plantis Eccle-  
sie lib. 2. art.  
61.*

Descended from the Father of Lights, Dictated by our Heavenly Master, Strengthen'd by his own most Holy Example, Practis'd by his Apostles and Chief Disciples ; Sign'd and Seal'd with those sacred Marks of Man's Redemption, the most Holy *Stigmates*, of its Seraphical Founder. Confirm'd by *Innocent III.* *Honorius III.* and so many other Popes. Approv'd by General Councils. Inserted in the Body of the Canon-Law. Declar'd and Interpreted by *Greg. IX.* *Innoc. IV.* *Alex. IV.* *Greg. X.* *Nic. III.* *Clem. V.* *John. XXII.* Embellish'd with the Lives of so many Saints ; Canoniz'd above 50, Beatified 600, Martyr'd, 1500. Ever Impugn'd by Libertines and Wicked Men, and still Defended by virtuous and pious Christians ; Supported by their Authority, Shelter'd under their Protection, Introduc'd into all parts by their Favour, and Maintain'd at their Expences with Extraordinary Liberality and Benevolence ; the Charities of the People furnishing us with all Necessaries, much easier, and in greater Abundance, than the Revenues of the most flourishing Estates would be able to do. Illustrated with the Commentaries of so many learned Pens. Embrac'd by Popes, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Primates, Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Emperours, Kings, Princes. By so many Celebrated Doctors of Universities, and Founders of Schools. Besides an infinite Number of Religious Persons of this Order not to be reckon'd, of all Qualities, Ranks, and Conditions, multiplied, and dispers'd throughout the whole Universe.

O Divine Rule, worthy of the wisdom and Sublime Perfection of the Son of God ! with how much Reverence are you to be Receiv'd ? with what Circumspection to be Us'd ? with how great Attention to be Read ? with what Care to be Expounded ? with how profound Humility to be Embrac'd ? And with how much Devotion and Exactness to be Observ'd ?

*My Son, Keep  
the Principles  
of thy Faith.*

Again *This is the Rule.* } According to which, we are to square all the actions of our Life, having taken the obligation of

of it upon us. And therefore no pretended Ignorance will excuse us from the discharge of our Duty : Every Man being suppos'd to understand the Rules of that Art, which he makes Profession of. Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let us always have it by us, let us lay it to our Breast as our chiefest Treasure, let us frequently ruminate upon it, let it be our Meditation Night and Day, as a thing whereof we are one day to be accountable: For it must go to Judgment with us, and for that reason it is put into our Hands when we are carried to our Graves to be buried.

„ Therefore I intreat, *says our Holy Founder*, in the Name of „ Almighty God, all the Brethren to learn the Contents and „ Meaning of these things that are written here in this Form of „ Life for the good of their Souls, and often to revolve them in „ their minds. And I pray God, who is Omnipotent, Three and „ One, that he will bless all such as shall learn, teach, re- „ member, and practise them, as often times as they shall re- „ peat the said things, which are there deliver'd for our Salva- „ tion. And I beseech all by a Kiss of their Feet, that they „ will set much to heart, charily preserve, and lay them up. And again in another place, putting his Brethren in mind of the obligation of their State, he exhorts them after this manner to the observance of their Rule. " O most beloved Brethren, „ and for ever blessed Children, hear me, hear the voice of „ your Father: We have promis'd great Matters, but greater are „ promis'd to us. Let us observe those, and aspire after these. „ Pleasure is Short, Pain Everlasting. Suffering Little, Glory „ Infinite. Many are Call'd, Few Elected, All will be Required.

Behold, what ought to excite noble Resolutions in the breasts of all *Frier - Minors*, and greatly encourage them to the performance of their Duty; there being nothing more powerful to animate us to Vertue, and render the most difficult and strictest obligations of our Penitential State sweet, and easy to us, than the hope of future Recompence, or the greatness of that

Re-

*Bind them in thy heart continually, and put them about thy throat. wbe thou shalt walk, let them Go with thee: when thou shalt sleep let them keep thee, and awaking Talk with them.*

Prov. 6. 20.

1. Reg. Cap. 23.

*Opusc. Tom.  
3. Colloq. 33.*

Motives to Excite us to the observance of our Holy Rule.

*Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have Enter'd*

into the heart  
of Man the  
things which  
God has pre-  
par'd for them  
that love him.

1. Cor. 2. 9.

Pf. 118. 112.

Ep. 145. ad  
Virg. Demet.

4

## Of Frier-Minors.

Chap. I.

Reward we expect for it in the other world. It was by this hope, the Royal Prophet exercis'd himself in the observance of God's Law and Commandments, when he said : *I was resolv'd to persever unto the end in the Observance of your Precepts, whilst I beheld the Recompence I thereby expected.* There is no pain, says *S. Augustin*, tho' never so great, which will not become light, when you think upon the Recompence annex'd thereunto; for the hope of a Recompence is of great comfort in our Labours. Which we daily see and experience in Marchants, Labourers and Souldiers. The Marchant is not discourag'd at Tempests and Shipwracks; bad Weather do's not keep the Labourer from his Work; neither are the continual Fatigues, Wounds, nor Death itself, able to affright the Souldier, or make him quit the Field, barely upon the account of that Temporal gain he has in prospect. And shall we then *Frier-Minors*, who by our Profession have renounc'd all right and title to the things of the Earth, and whose Hopes and Inheritance are in Heaven, startle and be afraid of the Mortifications and Sufferings inioyn'd us by our Rule? Since they are the best means, whereby to gain the possession of what we hope for. Shall these Persons expose themselves to inconveniencies and dangers, *For a fading Corruptible Crown, and we who expect an Immortal one*, stand looking on and do nothing?

1. Cor. 9. 25.

*Admon. ad fil.  
Spirit.*

*S. Basil* also extremely recommends this means unto us; Let your Heart, says he, continually be employ'd in thinking upon the Heavenly promises, that they may encourage you to advance in the way of Vertue. It was by this also, *S. Antony* excited his Disciples, to persever continually in the severity of a Religious Course; and sometimes, as astonish'd at God's Liberality, there is, says he, a great Equality in the Traffick that Men make in the world; each one gives as much as he receives; and that which is sold, is worth the price that is given for it. But as for Eternal Glory, it is given for a small price, since Holy

Will

Wise tells us, *That the Ordinary Course and Life of Man last's only for Seventy years, and that even the Strongest scarce arrive to Fourscore; and the years above this Age abound only with pain and misery.* Wherefore tho' we should have serv'd God for Fourscore or a Hundred years, or more, he do's not recompence us only with so many years of Glory, but our recompence will have no end, we shall reign Eternally in Glory, as long as God shall be God. And besides, what is no less Admirable than Comfortable, is, that so long as we live, it is in our power continually to increase this everlasting and never fading Crown. Which made a Servant of God to cry out, and say: O thrice Happy Mortals, who still live in the world, in whose power it is to augment their Glory every moment! Did but Man know how much he might increase his merit every Day, he would never wake without a cheerful heart replenish'd with joy, to think he is to begin another Day, in which living to God, he may be assisted by his divine Grace every moment to advance his Honour, and his own Merit. This very thought is sufficient to encourage and strengthen us against all the Mortifications and Austerities of our Rule, and make us suffer them with satisfaction and delight. There's no Labourer, says *S. Bernard*, tho' never so stupid, that complains that the Seed-time last's too long; because he knows for certain, that the less time he spends in Sowing, the less plentiful will be his Harvest. That of a Religious Man ought to be the same; the Penances, Sufferings, and Mortifications of his State and Profession ought not to seem long, nor troublesome; because now is his Seed-time, and the more he labours and sows at present, the greater will be his Crop hereafter. And we cannot increase our Sowing, tho' it be never so little, adds the Saint, but it will always produce a greater abundance of Grain, when the time of Harvest comes. When the Labourer sees that for a Bushel of wheat he sow'd

*Ep. ad Monach.  
Ecclef. S. Virg.*

*De Prof. Re-  
lig. l. 1. c. 13.*

he Reaps twenty or thirty, he could wish he had Sown a greater Quantity. Hereupon *S. Bonaventure* exhorts his Brethren to be extremely careful how they bestow themselves, and never to let slip any the least opportunity offer'd them for their improvement in Vertue; Because, says he, as much as we spend of Idle time here, so much do we diminish our degrees of Glory hereafter. We read that the Companions and Scholars of one of the Ancient Fathers, having observ'd his continual Mortifications and Austerities, press'd him one Day to be more remiss and moderate therein: To whom he reply'd, My dearest Children, were the condition of the Blessed in Heaven capable of grief, they would extremely regret their not having suffer'd more in this world, since they now clearly see the Reward they might have had, and how much they might have increas'd their Happiness, and at how easy a rate. And certainly did we but consider the vast Reward which will infallibly follow the performance of what is requir'd of us, we should presently be convinc'd how inconsiderable that is, which is expected from us for the gaining it; and believe that to get Heaven at such an easy rate, is to purchase it for Nothing. *Wherefore my Beloved Children,* says *S. Paul*, *be not weary in Fighting against your Enemy, nor let the Ambition of Vain-glory flatter and deceive you. For all the Sufferings of this Life have no proportion with that future Glory, that shall be reveal'd in us. These short and light Afflictions produce in us an unconceivable and Eternal weight of Glory.* This consideration had taken deep root in the Soul of our blessed Founder, when being ask'd, How he could with so much Chearfulness, Resolution, and Constancy endure those violent anguishes, afflictions and torments of his Eyes, and of all the other parts of his Body, he made answer: "That the Glory which he expected, in the other world was so Intense, that all Pain, Sickness, Humi-

*Rom. 8. 18.*

*2. Cor. 4. 17.*

*Opusc. Tom.  
3. Apoteg. 59.*

„Humiliation, Persecution, Mortification was exceeding  
 „pleasing and delightful to him.

O my Soul, conceive from hence a great Esteem, and Love  
 forthy Rule; Since it is to thee the occasion of so great Happiness.  
 Write it in the Tables of thy Heart, which are thy three Facul-  
 ties; in thy Memory, to be always mindful of it; in thy Under-  
 standing, to meditate continually thereon; in thy will, to love,  
 embrace, and put it in execution. Dear Lord, how have I lov'd  
 thy Law? All the Day long it is the Subject of my Meditation.  
 I will meditate thereon in my House, and upon the Way, at my  
 Down-lying, and Up-rising; I will put it as a Mark upon my Hands,  
 to work thereafter; and I will have it before mine Eyes, to guide  
 me thereby. O Sweet *Iesus*, who art the Author of it, do thou  
 engrave it on my Heart, and it shall never be blotted out. O  
 Divine Rule, how pleasing and pretious are thy words! Oh,  
 how far more sweet are thy Precepts to my Heart, than is Honey  
 to my Mouth!

Pſ. 118. 97.

Deut. 6. 7.

Pſ. 118. 103.

S. II. *And Life.*] Because in the continual practice of this  
 our Seraphical Rule, the life of a *Frier-Minors* Soul do's  
 consist. As on the contrary, the said Rule will be an Everlast-  
 ing Reproach, and the occasion of Eternal Death to the  
 Professors of it, if they correspond not thereto, nor take care to  
 express in their manners the lively colours of those Evange-  
 lical Vertues contain'd therein. But instead of that, give them-  
 selves over to Indevotion, Tepidity and Sloth; to a con-  
 tempt of Regular Observance; and falling from their first  
 fervour, lose the Fear and Grace of God, become harden'd  
 in their evil ways, Slaves to their Sensual Appetites, a Bur-  
 then to their Convents, a Stumbling-block of scandal to  
 their Brethren, and a Reproach to all the world. For I be-  
 seech you, what can we expect in the other world for our  
 Reward but the sentence of Death, if we have prov'd Unpro-  
 fitable Servants in this? If we neglect to live up to that Form  
 of Life, to which we are solemnly engag'd by our Vows,  
 shal'd as it were with the most Holy *Stigmata*, of our Se-  
 raphical

*My Son, let  
 not these things  
 depart from  
 thine Eyes :  
 Keep my Law  
 and Command-  
 ments ; and  
 there shall be  
 Life unto thy  
 Soul. Prov. 3.  
 21.*

*Considerations  
 to deter us  
 from transgre-  
 ssing our In-  
 stitute.*



raphical Founder ? What will it avail us to carry the name of *Franciscans*, if our Manners be not answerable to our Profession ? To contend with other Religious for the Super-eminent Excellency of our Institute before theirs, if we come behind them in Evangelical Perfection ? Above other Orders, to glory in our most Pure Chastity ( which excludes even the very Shadow of the least Speck of Impurity ) ; In our Unlimited and Universal Obedience ( which embraces all that is not against God and our Soul ) ; And in our most Sublime Poverty ( which possessing nothing of its Own, is content with the bare use of Fact of other Peoples things, purely necessary for the preservation of Life, without having any thing Curious, Precious, or Superfluous ) : All this, I say, what Benefit will it be to us, or rather what Confusion ; if the Deformity of our lives fully our Reputation, and instead of raising us above, cast us under the feet of all the world ?

Hear how the God of Vengeance speaks to such as these  
*Mal. 2. 8.* by the Prophet *Malachy*. *You have departed out of the way, and have scandaliz'd many in the Law : You have made void the Covenant of Levi, says the Lord of Hosts. For which cause I have also made you contemptible and base before all People.* And our Blessed Founder thunders out his

*Vite c. 8.* Malediction upon them after this manner : " Accursed be  
 „ they, O most Holy Lord, by thee, and by the whole  
 „ Celestial Court, and by me thy little Servant, who with  
 „ their bad Example do confound and destroy, what by the  
 „ holy Brethren of this Order thou hast built, and ceaseſt  
*Opusc. Tom.* „ not Daily to build. *And again :* Wo be to them, who  
*2. Collat. 22.* „ contenting themselves with only a shew of Religious Con-  
 „ versation, shall be found Idle, without employing them-  
 „ selves in Vertuous works, in the way of the Cross, and in  
 „ the pure observance of the Holy Gospel, to which they are  
 „ strictly oblig'd by their Profession.

Add

Add to this, *the Remorse of Conscience*, which never fails to accompany those that are negligent in the performance of their Duty: For what Satisfaction can a Religious man find, who having enter'd into Religion to advance in Vertue and Perfection, labours not at all to make any progress therein? It is impossible but he must interiourly suffer a great deal of trouble and disquiet of Mind; since he always carry's about him the worm of Conscience which gnaws his bowels with continual remorse. It is by your order O Lord, says *S. Austin*, that all Irregularity of mind should carry its punishment along with it. This interiour Irregularity of the Appetite in regard of Reason, and of Reason in regard of God, causes very great pains and disquiets in Man; and it is the same in all other things of the world: For what is there in Nature, which is not in disquiet and disorder, and do's not suffer very much, whilst it is not in that state or situation, in which, the Rule and Law of Nature has ordain'd and plac'd it? What pains do's not a Bone out of ioynt occasion? What violence do not Natural Bodies suffer, when they are out of their Element? In the same manner, because it is so very fit and natural to Man, to live according to Reason, ought not Nature to cry out against him, when he declines from its Dictates? And ought not his own Conscience continually to check him, when he lives contrary to the same? *Who is able to resist him*, says Holy *Job*, speaking of God, and *enjoy any Peace*? We can never hope to be in Peace with ourselves, living in such state; and therefore *S. John*, says in the *Apocalyps*, *That those who ador'd the Beast, enjoy'd no Peace Night or Day*. Your Flesh, your Sensuality is this Beast, if you will be subject to it, and trample under foot the Laws of God, and your Vows; you will never enjoy any Peace. It is a thing very much to be wonder'd at,

B

Sting of Conscience a great torment.

*Conf. c. l. c. 12.*

*Job. 9. 4.*

*Apo. 14. 11.*

That a Tepid Religious suf-  
that

fors more in  
not obser-  
ving his Rule  
than a good  
Religious  
Man do's by  
observing it.

Prov. 15. 19.

Osce 2. 6.

Prov. 15. 19.

Job. 6. 16.

that he who serves God with Fervour, should find more pleasure and satisfaction in Fasting, Watching, Praying, in Disciplines, Hair-shirts and all other Mortifications, than a loose and tepid Religious Man in all his Conversations, Entertainments, and seeming Sweetnesses of an easy life, and in the full enjoyment of his own Will. A tepid Religious Man is outwardly cheerful, whilst he is bitterly afflicted within; but a Just Man always feels a holy joy in his Heart, even in the midst of all his Sufferings. *The way of the Slothful, says the Wise Man, is like a Hedge of Thorns.* That is to say, in all they do, they are always as if they were walking upon Thorns, with so much uneasiness. And it is to such as these, to whom God speaks by the Prophet *Osce*, when he says: *Behold I have compass'd your way with Thorns.* He wills that even the Pastimes and pleasures, that they take in following their own will, should be all mingl'd with remorse, bitterness and discontent; and here it is, that the Tepid and Negligent find those Thorns which prick them, and even pierce their Hearts. *But in the way of the Just there is no Stumbling block, his path is very smooth.* What peace, what satisfaction is that, which a good Religious Man, that is truly Mortified, enjoys, who has care of his Spiritual Advancement, and performs what Religious Persons ought to do? There is no Contentment like to his. We daily experience, that when we serve God with fervour, we have such a joy and interior satisfaction, as cannot be express'd; and when we serve him tepidly and negligently, we fall into dejection and disquiet. And in effect, it is very often the Cause of that sadness and bitterness we feel, when to save a little pains and trouble, we cause ourselves far greater, according to the words of *Job*: *He that fears Frost, shall be overwhelm'd with Snow.* And he that hates and flies Mortification

tion upon the account of avoiding Trouble, shall meet with greater than he that embraces it, and carry a far heavier Cross. For see you not, for Example, what disposition of mind you are in, when it happens that you permit yourself to be so far transported with Choler and Impatience, as to give ill language to your Brother, or to do something that gives Scandal? In what pain, what trouble, what discontent, what uneasiness do you find yourself? It is very certain, that the pain you feel hereby is far greater, than that you would have felt in mortifying your Passion. Consider again, how great the fears and apprehensions are of a Religious Person, that has not the Spirit of indifferency and resignation to whatsoever by Obedience, his Superiour shall think fit to impose upon him; one only thing, to which he has a repugnance, is sufficient to keep him continually upon the Rack; because he has a constant *Idea* thereof before his eyes, which puts him in continual Alarms and frights; and is as a Man that has the Gout in his hands and feet, who imagines that all that are about him may come so near as to hurt him; so a Religious Person, who has not true Obedience and the spirit of Subjection, is always in fears and apprehensions, that Superiours are about to order that which gives him the greatest pain and difficulty. When on the other side, who is indifferent to all Employments, and resign'd to all things, is always chearful, is always content, and has nothing to be afraid of. It is the very same in all other things. Your Passions are so many Executioners, that continually torment you, so long as you do not do your Duty, and mortifie yourself, for which you came to Religion; whether that which they move you to desire happens or not; for even when that is obtain'd, this also gives a Religious man pain and trouble, as often as he thinks upon it. What! Have I then perform'd what I aim'd at, and

Bij

got

got thereby no Merit at all ? Because I only sought my own Will and satisfaction therein. And thus all the sweetness of the Action is presently turn'd into bitterness and gall. Behold what attends religious *Libertines*, carnal and irregular Spirits ; Shame, Sorrow, Remorse, and Eternal Death : But the *Vertuous* and *Iust* ; Honour, Peace, Joy, and Life Everlasting.

O God of my Soul, daily augment in me this sting of Conscience, this divine Goad ; that it may serve me for a spur to Virtue, and for a scourge against Vice. Discover also to me the innumerable Treasures, which thou reserv'st for Iust Souls in the other Life, to the end that the Love of them may incite me to my Duty. Make known likewise to me the bottomless Abyss of the miseries of the Damn'd, that the fear of such terrible Evils may urge me to the discharge of my Vows, when the love of Celestial Goods do not awake me.

Be not you call'd Rabbi ; for one is your Master, and all you are Brethren.

Math. 23. 8.

He that is the greater among you, let him become as the lesser ; and he that is the leader as the waiter. For which is greater, he that sits at the Table, or he that ministers ? Is not he that sits ? But I am in the midst of you, as he that ministers. Luc.

22. 26.

Chron. p. 1. 1.

7. c. 41.

§. III. Of Frier-Minors. ] Who by their Humility, are to be less, than all other Religious in God Almighty's Church ; plain, poor, simple Ideots, and subject to all the world for Christ's sake ; call'd Little, that they may not presume to be Great. These are they of whom *James de Vissaco* speaks in his History of the West, Chap. 23. This, says he, is the poor Religion of the *Crucified*, which we name *Frier-Minors* ; truly *Minors*, being more humble in their Dress, in Nakedness, and the Contempt of the world, than all other Regulars of this Age ; drinking with an ardent thirst the most pure waters of the Evangelical Fountain, and diligently procuring to reform in themselves the Poverty, Humility, and Religion of the Primitive Church. And *B. Giles*, one of our Holy Fathers Companions, says : That a *Frier-Minor*, is as much as to say, some base and vile person, kickt under foot by all Men ; who, by how much the lower he descends, so much the higher he ascends.

His

### §. III.

### *Their Rule.*

13

His greatest glory is to protest against, and abhor all Glory; and ever to sink down by the weight of Humility into the lowest place, as his true Center of rest, and not to be detain'd above but by violence and meer force.

*Frier-Minor*  
a name of  
Humility.

Hear likewise what our Holy Founder himself says upon this matter in one of his *Colloquies*: " My Brethren, my  
„ Brethren, our Lord has call'd me to him, by the way  
„ of *Simplicity* and *Humility*, and this way he has markt  
„ out, as the only path of Perfection for me, and for those  
„ that will stick to me and follow me therein. I will not  
„ therefore that you suggest to me either the Rule of *S.*  
„ *Benedict*, *S. Basil*, or of any other what ever, besides  
„ that which the Divine Mercy has given and reveal'd to  
„ me. Our Lord himself has spoken and said it, that he  
„ will have me to be his Fool in this world, and that he will  
„ not lead me and mine by any other way to Heaven, than  
„ by this, which tho' it appears to Men to be meer Folly,  
„ yet with God it is accounted for the greatest Wisdom. And  
„ again, in the little Work which he intitles, *The six*  
„ *Reasons why Frier-Minors are lent to the Church*. Among  
„ others he alledges this for one: " *Frier-Minors*, says  
„ he, are given to the World, that they may be Witnesses  
„ and Imitators of the derision, scorn, ignominy, and humili-  
„ lity of *Jesus-Christ*; by despising and trampling under their  
„ feet the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of the world; and  
„ by a real disesteem, mortification, and contempt of them-  
„ selves for the love of God. *And then concludes after this*  
„ *manner*: " O my most affectionate, and best beloved Bre-  
„ thren in *Christ*, understand therefore, and consider well  
„ your Vocation, and why you are call'd *Minors*; to the  
„ end, that making yourselves in this world lesser than all  
„ men, more base, vile and abject, you may become grea-  
„ ter in God's favour and divine grace here on Earth, and

*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Colloq. 4.*

*Opusc. s. Franc.*  
*in Append. cur*  
*FF. MM. con-*  
*cessi sunt Eccle-*  
*sia.*

in

1. Cor. 4. 10.

"in Heaven be exalted to a higher degree of glory. I conclude with *S. Paul*, who in his Epistle to the *Corinthians* gives you a true description of a *Frier-Minor*, which is the same with that of an *Apostolical Man*. *We*, says he, *are fools for Christ; but you wise in Christ. We weak, but you strong; you noble, but we base. Until this hour we do both hunger, and thirst; and are naked, and are beaten with buffets, and are wanderers, and labour working with our own hands. We are cursed; and do bless. We are persecuted; and do sustain so. We are blasphem'd; and we beseech. We are made the Refuse of this world, the Dross of all even until now.*

Eccli. 3. 20.

O my Soul, remember the saying of the wise Man: *The greater thou art humble thy self in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God. Fly from Pride, if it be but to avoid thy hurt, and embrace Humility though it be but for thine own profit. For it is a general Law from the which thou shalt not be excepted, That whosoever exalts himself shall be humb'd, and that whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted.* Comply thou with that which belongs to thee according to the precept of thy Rule, making thyself a true *Frier-Minor*, humbling thyself for thy Sins, and God will perform that which belongs to him, exalting thee with his Gifts. O Humble Jesus, grant me, I beseech thee, this virtue and all others becoming my Profession; that my *Life* and my *Name* corresponding to my holy Rule, I may deserve to be reckon'd among the number of thy prime Disciples.

Luc. 14. 11.

Behold what the Name of *Frier-Minor* gives its Professors to understand, and what rank they ought to hold amongst Men. Now the better to preserve these low Sentiments in us, and contain ourselves in the Center of our Humility, and the knowledge of our miserable Nothing, and to begot in us a true Contempt of all worldly vanities, riches, honours, delights, pomps, and magnificencies of the Earth, I will here present my Reader with two or three Considerations well worthy of his most serious Attention.

Reasons to shew, that Man ought to have a mean Esteem of himself, and of all worldly things.

The

The first is, that every thing in this World preaches to Man his Misery and Baseness. On what side soever he looks, he sees the tokens of his Infirmities; and scarce can he go a step, but he finds a lesson of Humility against his Vanities. If he consider what is above him; he beholds the Heavens and the Air, which so waste and change his life, that yet without them, he cannot live: If he cast his eye round about him, and under his feet, he sees Waters, which in moistening him, rot him; and Earth, which being spread as a Table before his eyes, fails not to serve him for a Tomb. It is a strange thing that even Evils are necessary for him, and that he cannot overslip things which kill him: Smelling, Tasting, Meat and Drink, Sleep and Repose, do with his life what *Penelope* did with her Web; what one hour makes, another unmakes; and the very Sources of the greatest blessings are found to be wholly infected with mortal poison. But if Man come to examine himself, he finds he is a meer Excrement of iniquity in his Conception, a silly Creature in his Birth, a bag and sponge of ordures in his Life, and a bait for worms in his Death. His Body is frail, naked, disarm'd, begging of all Creatures, expos'd to all the injuries of Elements, of Beasts and Men, and there is not a hand so little, which strives not violently to pull off his skin. Heat, Cold, Drouth, Moisture, Labour, Maladies of 3000. different kinds, Old Age exercise him; and if he think to take a little repose, Idleness corrupts him. If he enter farther into himself, he meets a Soul fastn'd to the brink of his lips, which is invaded by an Army of Passions, so many times flesh'd for his ruine. Love fools him, Ambition turmoils him, Avarice rusts him, and Lust inflames him, vain Hopes sooth him, Pleasures melt him, Despair depresses him, Choler burns him, Hatred fills him with gall, Envy gnaws him, Jealousie pricks him, Revenge enrages



enrages him . Cruelty makes him savage , Fears freeze him , and Sorrow consumes him . Moreover he fails not to be afflicted with so many Mutations , so many Vicissitudes , that we may say , there is almost nothing less in him , than Himself . Ages alter him , and in changing him , change themselves : Infancy becomes Adolescence , Adolescence is taken off by Youth , Youth by Manhood , Manhood by declining years , and these years by decrepit Age . If you reckon well , you shall find every one of these Mutations , is a *species* of Death . As Time alters his Body , a thousand other things make impression on his Mind . Humours , occupations , change of Country , conversations , customs , accidents , honours , education , affairs , vices and virtues , so often transform him into another Person , that we may say , he is the most natural Pourtrait of Inconstancy in the whole Universe . and as it were , nothing in Nature to be trusted to .

With all this , he lives in a wretched and miserable World , where is to be seen an Ocean of evils : As are a servitude of Marriages , an evil rencounter of wives and Husbands , of Affairs , of Cares , of Poverty , of Children ; of Slanders , of Quarrels , Affronts , of Contumelies , of Bodily pains , of faintness of Spirit , of ruines of Families , of Punishments , of Privation of all one loves , of vexations by all one hates ; A World , which is a true Dream , that has the disturbances of sleep , but never the repose ; a childish Amusement ; a Toil of burthensom and ever-relapsing actions ; where for one Rose a thousand Thorns are found , for one ounce of Honey a tun of Gall , for Blessings in apparence , Evils in substance . The most Happy here count their years , but cannot reckon their griefs . The Carriers of the greatest Honours are all of Ice , and oftentimes are not bounded , but with headlong ruines . Its Felicities are floating Islands ; which always recoil backward at that time when we think to touch them  
with

with our finger. They are the Feasts of *Heliogabalus*, where there are many invitations, many ceremonies, many reverences, many services, and at the end thereof we find a table and banquet of Wax, which melts before the fire, and from whence we return more hungry than we came. It is the enchanted Egg of *Oromazes*, wherein this Impostor vaunted to have inclos'd all the Happiness of the world, and in breaking it there was found nothing but Wind.

If there be Pleasures in life, they do nothing but a little slightly overflow the Heart with a superficial delectation: Sadness dives into the bottom of the Soul, and when it is there, you will say it has feet of Lead, never to forsake the place; but Pleasure do's only tickle us in the outside of the Skin, and then all those sweet Waters run down with haste, to discharge themselves in the Sea of bitterness. They are born in the Senses, and like *Abortives* are consum'd in their Birth; their Desires are full of disturbances; their Access is of violent, forc'd, and turbulent agitations; their Satiety is fard with shame, and repentance; they pass away after they have wearied the Body, and leave it like a bunch of Grapes, the juice whereof is extracted by the Press. They stretch themselves out at full length, to much purpose, when they must end with this life; and it is a great chance, if even during life, they prove not Executioner to him that entertains them.

O my blessed Creator! What Contentment then can I take in the best of thy Creatures? All this plainly shews, thou hast made my Heart for thy self; and till it rests in thee, its true Center, it remains totally Unsatisfy'd. O Worldly Glories! O deceitful Pleasures! What are you but mere Illusions, wretched Lime-twigs, poor and perishing Trifles, compar'd to my God's Essential Goodness? O my Sovereign Good! Grant that I may henceforward so love thy Creatures, and make such use

C

*The Eye is not satisfied with seeing, neither is the Ear fill'd with hearing. Eccles. 1. 8.*

*Laughter I have reputed Error; and to Joy I have said: Why art thou deceiv'd in vain? Eccles. 2. 2.*

of

of all Temporal blessings ; that my chief Delight may rest in thee , and my Hopes never be unfastn'd from their true , final , and Eternal Happinefs.

## 2. Reason.

To these , let us add another strong Argument of the great Frailty and Weakness of Man ; so still more to lessen ourselves. It is the great Abiection and Infirmity of the Mightiest on earth ; which is of power to humble those who think themselves the most able in the world. O God ! What weakness , what confusion of Humane Essence , to have been an Eternity in *Nothing* , not to be able to draw itself out of it , nor to subsist in Nature one moment without the hand of the Omnipotent ! For , if you mount in thought , still ascending upward to the source of Time , when you shall have reckon'd millions of Ages , you shall find nothing but labyrinths and abysses of this great Eternity without end , and when you shall present to yourself all that Time which has preceded , be it real , or imaginary , you will be asham'd to see so many millions of Years , wherein you had not so much as the essence of a Rush , of a Butter-fly , or a silly Gnat. That *Rodomont* , who threatens to hew down Mountains , and thunder-strike Mortals , and thinks all the ample house of Nature was created only for him , who swallows the world by Avarice , and wastes it as fast by Riot , thirty or forty years ago was not able to contend for excellency with a *Catter-piller* ; and now whilst he *is* , is not able so much as to lift up a Hand , without the concurrence and help of his Creator ; and then , after he has had a silly being for as many years more , shall again cease to *be* , as a Body confiscated by death , abandon'd to worms , despoil'd even to the bones , become dust , and consum'd to be reduc'd into the mass of Elements , from whence he came ; no more Memory of him remaining , than if he had never been.

Behold ,

*Behold , thou  
hast measur'd  
all my Days ,  
and my Sub-  
stance is as no-  
thing before  
thee ; Doubt-  
less all things  
are Vanity ,  
every Man li-  
ving* Ps. 38. 6.

*Man's days  
are as Grass ,  
as the Flower  
of the field so  
shall he flou-  
rish : The Spirit  
shall pass in  
him , and he  
shall not sub-  
sist ; and he  
shall know his  
place no more .  
Psf. 102. 15.*

*In the Sweat*

### §. III.

### *Their Name*

19

Behold, that which much abases the Pride of the most vain-glorious, is to recall into their minds their last end, to think upon a Bier and Tomb, and reflect on that ample Grave, whereinto all Mankind insensibly sinks; which Holy Job call'd, *The Stone of darkness*, and the Ancients nam'd, *the Secret of horror*. The greatest Princes of the Earth resemble *Alexander's Stone*; the most excellent of the world in the brightness of Lustre; but so soon as it was cover'd with Dust, it had neither force nor beauty beyond other Stones: How great, rich, active soever they be, during their Life, the Dust of a Sepulcher makes it appear they are Nothing, after Death. *Seneca* was astonish'd, how one could say there were Comets which presag'd the death of Great Men. It is not credible, says he, the Universe should interest itself in the loss of Particulars, yea were it of Monarchs. We all bud forth like the leaf of a Tree; and die as the leaf; neither our Life nor Death any thing imports this great All. So many Persons go daily in and out of the World, as small drops of Water into the Sea. The Ocean is no whit alter'd, either by their entrance in, or passage out.

O infinite God! whose essence is to Be, and who alone art He who is; without whom we neither have to be, to know, to will, to work, nor any Motion or Operation; but as we all come from nothing, so should we return again into nothing, and as a Garment should wax old and perish, if thou didst not always give us Being, and all belonging to it, and continually conserve the same in us. Open O Lord, I beseech thee, my understanding, that I may acknowledge this truth, and confess the Being which thou hold'st of thine own Essence, and the not Being and Nothing which I have of mine own self: That upon these two knowledges, as upon two Poles, the Wheel of my whole life may roll; to the end that henceforth I may esteem whatsoever is Created, for dung and dirt, for vanity and nothing, in respect of uniting me with thee my Creator and Preserver, to love thee, and serve thee, who art the only true, firm, stable, immutable, and Eternal God, blessed for Ever.

Cij

But

of thy face  
shalt thou eat  
Bread, till  
thou return to  
Earth, of  
which thou  
wast taken:  
because Dust  
thou art, and  
into Dust thou  
shalt return.  
*Gen. 3. 19.*

*Nat. 22.*  
*l. 4. c. 1.*

There shall be  
no memory of  
the Wise in like  
manner as of  
the Fool for  
ever, and the  
Times to come  
shall cover all  
things together  
with Oblivion:  
the learned dies in  
like manner  
as the unlearned.  
*Eccles. 2. 16.*

## 3. Reason.

But to give a farther check to the Pride and Loftiness of Humane Nature, let us here also call to mind, what some of the wisest Men in the world have said concerning the Rise, Progress, and End of Man; from whence we shall learn somewhat more distinctly, what Man is in his birth or coming into the world; what in his prime and most flourishing years; what in old age, and what at his death or going out of the world. What is Man, says *Seneca*? A frail Vessel broken with the least motion, a most weak Body, naked by nature, and unarm'd, necessitous of Mothers help, subject to the iniuries of fortune, impatient of cold and labour, compos'd of things infirm and fluid. What is Man, says *Solon*? A Corruption in his birth, a Beast in his life, and Food for worms when he is dead. What is Man, says *Aristotle*? An *Idea* of weakness, a Spoil of time, a Game of fortune, an Image of inconstancy, a Balance of envy and calamity, and the rest is of Flegm and Choler. What is Man, says *Secundus* the Philosopher? An incorporated Understanding, a Fantasm of time, a Looker upon life, a Slave of death, a travelling Passenger, a Guest of place, a Toiling Soul, a Habitation for a short time. Again what is Man? More fully answers *Innocent* the Pope to this Question, in his *Book of the Contemplation of the world*, Chap. 1. where he speaks thus. I have consider'd, says he, with tears, what Man was made of, what he is, and what he shall be. He was made of Earth, and conceiv'd in Sin, and born for Punishment. He do's things Evil, which are not lawful; things Filthy, which are not decent; and things Vain, which are not expedient. He shall be the Food of fire, Meat for worms, and a Mass of corruption. O vile indignity of Humane condition! O unworthy condition of Humane baseness! Behold the Plants and Trees, they produce Flowers, and Leaves, and Fruit

Fruit; and thou nothing but *Nits*, *Lice*, and *Worms*: They furnish us with Oil, Wine, and Balsom; thou afford'st nothing but *Flegm*, *Dung*, and *Urine*: These send forth a fragrant Odour, and thou abominable Stink. This is the saying of this holy Pope. And such is Man-even in his Youth, at the height of his most Gay season: But if he reach Old Age, which is esteem'd as a Felicity, the same *Innocent* adds. His Heart is afflicted, his Head shakes, his Spirits languish, his Breath smells, his Face wrinkles, his Stature bends, his Eyes wax dim, his Joints quake, his Nose runs, his Hands tremble, his Hair falls, his Teeth rott, his Ears grow deaf. Neither is he more chang'd in Body, than in Mind. An Old man is easily displeas'd, hardly pacified, believes quickly, long before disabus'd, is greedy, covetous, peevish, froward, still complaining, quick in Talking, slow in Hearing, admires what is Past, contemns what is Present, dotes, sighs, grieves, languishes, and is always infirm, still ailing something, and never content.

It may also appear what Man is, by the Stuff whereof he is made. The first Man God made of Clay, mixing together the vilest and grossest Elements. The rest of men, who have succeeded, have been made of a Matter more loathsome and unclean; and worse is that wherewith they are nourish'd in their Mothers Wombs; and their Birth is accompanied with shame, grief, and pollution; which *Pliny* considering speaks in this manner. It is a compassion, nay a shame, says he, to think of the Original of the proudest of living Creatures, which is Man, who often is Abortive by the smell of a newly extinguish'd Candle. Thou which glory'st in the strength of Body, thou which embrac'st the gifts of Fortune, thou who sett'st thy mind wholly upon Victories, thou who pust up with Success hold'st thy self a God, see how thou might'st have perish'd

even

*The Days of our  
years in them,  
Seventy years:  
And if in  
strong ones -  
Eighty years;  
and the more  
of them, La-  
bour and Sar-  
row. Ps. 89-  
10.*

even before thou wert, with so little a thing as the Snuff of a Candle; and may'lt yet with a smaller Matter, pricke with the little tooth of an Adder; or like *Anacreon* the Poet choak'd with the stone of a Grape; or, like *Fabius* the *Roman* Senator, suffocated with a Hair in a draught of milk. Thus far *Pliny*, who not only admir'd the Baseness of the nature of Man, but also the great Uncertainty of his life.

The Sorrows of  
Death have  
compassed me.  
Ps. 17. 5.

Finally consider Man upon his leaving the world, wherein he ends; and you shall behold a Mortal Body at the approaches and pangs of Death, to feel great disturbances, to turn here and there, rub the bed-clothes with his hands, to suffer violent convulsions, shut fast the teeth, choak words, have a trembling lower lip, pale visage, sharp nose, troubl'd memory, speech fumbling, cold sweat, the white of the eye sunk, and the Aspect totally chang'd. This is Man's frightful and hideous Departure out of this world. But what is he, when he is Dead? Man whilst he lives, says the fore-mention'd Pope *Innocent*, engenders lice and vermin; when he is dead, grubs and worms: Whilst he lives, affords nothing but dung and vomits; when he is dead, stink and rottenness; alive he feeds but one Man, but dead a multitude of Worms. What thing more noisom than a Humane Carcass? What more horrible than a Dead Man? He whose Embraces were most acceptable when he was Alive, even his Sight is troublesome when he is Dead. What do Riches, Banquets, or Delights profit us? They shall not free us from Death; they shall not defend us from the Worms; they shall not take away our stink or ill Savour. He who even now was seated in a glorious Throne, presently after is flung into an obscure Tomb: He who lately feasted in a sumptuous Hall, is now feasted upon by Worms in a dark Sepulcher. All this from this contemplative Pope. *S. Bernard* also

L. Medit. c. 3.

also considering the miserable Beginning and End of Man, says; Man is converted into no Man; why therefore art thou proud? Know that thou wert in the Womb unclean seed, and curdled blood, expos'd afterward to sin, and the many miseries of this life, and after death shalt be the food of Worms. Wherefore do'st thou wax proud, Dust and Ashes, whose Conception was in sin, whose Birth is misery, whose Life is pain, and whose Death a necessity? Why art thou proud, Man of earth, Beast of carriage, Vessel of dung? If thou mark'st what thou void'st at thy Mouth, Nose, and the other Sinks of thy Body, thou hast not in all thy life beheld a more noisom Dung-hill than Thyself. Wherefore do'st thou swell, and adorn thy Flesh with pretious things, which in few days is to be devour'd by Worms; and do'st not rather adorn thy Soul with good Works, which is to be presented in Heaven before God and his Angels?

O my Soul here humble thy self to the very Center of the Earth, and be confounded at thy misery, baseness, and abyssal Nothing. Reflect on the day of thy Prosperity, what thou hast been, what thou art, and what will be the end of thy wretched Body. Consider whom thou cherish'st, whom thou pamper'st, whom thou adors't; for all is but Dust, rais'd by the wind from the face of the Earth, which will presently return to fall into it again. Be asham'd to subject thy self to so vile, base, and short-liv'd thing; rather subiect it, like a Slave to thee, that it may aid thee to negotiate life Everlasting. O Eternal God! clear the eyes of my Soul with a beam of thy sovereign Light, that it may behold the Birth, Progress, and End of its miserable Companion; and contemn the present life, with the view of that is to come.

To conclude, the last Consideration which I here propose for a Motive to humble ourselves, is, the Judgment which God will exercise upon Man, at his Departure hence into the other world. It is an unchangeable Decree, that we must

4. Reason.



*2. Cor. 5. 10.  
All things that  
are done, God  
Will bring into  
Judgment,  
With every  
hidden thing,  
whether it  
be good, or  
whether it be  
evil. Eccles. 12.  
14.*

*In the end of a  
Man, is the  
disclosing of  
his Works.  
And it is easy  
before God in  
the day of  
Death, to re-  
ward every  
one according  
to his ways.  
Eccles. 12. 28.*

must all be presented before the high Tribunal of the living God, to render a iust Account of all which our Soul has done, whilst it was ioynd with our Body, as we are taught by *S. Paul*. We must make an account of our Time spent, of our Thoughts, Words, Actions, of that we have done, of that we have omitted, of life, death, and of the blood of *Jesus-Christ*; and thereupon receive a Iudgment of Everlasting Life, or Death. Behold, Brethren, what a strict Examination we must undergo when we come to Die. What can be more Terrible! O how great will be in that Day the solitude of a Soul in her separation from so many great enticements of the world, wherein many men live, and in an instant to see nothing but the Good or Ill we have done, on either side us? What an Astonishment will it be for a man suddenly to see all the Actions of his life, as upon a piece of *Tapistry*, spread before his eyes; where his Sins will appear like so many Thorns, so many Serpents, so many venomous Beasts? Where will then be that cozening veil of Reputation, and reason of State, which as yet cover so many wicked actions? The Soul shall, in that day of God, be shew'd naked to all the world, and her own Eyes will most vex her, by witnessing so plainly what she has done. O what a division will then be made of some men which now live upon Earth? Some shall be made clear and bright like the Stars of Heaven, and others like burning Coals in Hell. O what a dreadful change will it be to a Damn'd Soul at her separation from this life, in a Moment to be hurry'd away to Hell, there to live only in the company of Devils, in that piercing sense of Torments and Eternal punishments? It is a very troublesom thing, to be tied with silken strings in a bed of Roses, for the space of eight days together; what then may we think of a Damn'd Soul; which must dwell in

in a bed of Flames, so long as there shall be a God ? An Infinite God, an Eternal God, a Just God ; so long shall Hell be her share ; Hell, the great lake of the Almighty's wrath ; Hell, the Common-shore of all the filth of the world ; Hell, the Storehouse of Everlasting fire ; Hell, the bottomless depth, where there is no Evil but must be expected, nor Good that can be hop'd.

Now who is he that considers this, dares be so bold as to commit a Mortal Sin, since One alone is to be punish'd with such dismal pains ? If we made but a serious reflexion upon these words, *Go ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire.* If we consider'd seriously the everlasting duration of an Unhappy Eternity ; and that so severe a Sentence is to be pass'd upon us, would there be any one so foolish, think you, as for a moment of Pleasure, to expose himself to such eternal Torments ? S. *Thomas of Aquin* said, that he could not comprehend how a Person in Mortal Sin could have any joy or repose. And without doubt he had a great deal of reason ; because Man is not certain of the enjoyment of any one Moment of his life, and yet knows infallibly, that should he dye in this state, he would be sentenc'd to be damn'd for Ever. We read that *Damocles*, during a splendid Feast, and several exquisite consorts of Musick, could not find the least gust or pleasure in any thing, when he perceiv'd a Naked Sword hanging over his Head only by one single Hair ; for he trembl'd every moment, lest the said Hair should break, and the Sword fall, and cause his Death. What fear then ought that Man to have, who in the midst of the delights and filthy pleasures of this world, knows that at every instant he is threatn'd not only with a Temporal, but with an Eternal Death ; which also depending upon the slender thread of his Life, he may be suddenly taken

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*Math. 25. 41.*

off every moment ; so that going over Night to bed in perfect health, he may the next Morning find himself judg'd, condemn'd, and buried in the flames of Hell, without redemption, ease, relaxation, or the least hopes of ever seeing an End of his pains?

O infinite and iust God, O most Merciful Lord ! Settle this truth deep in my Heart, that I may never offend thee. O my Soul ! bewail bitterly thy Sins, that God may not strike thee with this dreadful Sentence of Eternal Damnation. O sweet Redeemer ! put forth with into my hand the sword of Penance, that I may, even now, without delay separate from me, whatsoever may hereafter be able to separate me from thee : Honours, Riches, Pleasures, Relations, Friends and Acquaintance, dying to all that is Created, to live to my Creator. O dreadful Sovereign ! *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no one living shall be iustify'd in thy sight.*

*Pf. 142. 2.*

*I am not ashamed of the Gospel. For it is the Power of God, unto Salvation to every one that believes. Rom. 1. 16.*

The Encouragements of the Gospel.

§. IV. *To wit, to observe the Holy Gospel.* ] To live according to the Precepts, and Counsels contain'd therein. In that Heavenly Book which teaches us the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life* : Embellish'd with the rays of an infinite number of Prophecies, which were verified in the person of its Author, the World's Redeemer : Propagated thro' the Universe after a most wonderful and unheard of manner, by twelve poor, ignorant and illiterate Men, destitute of all humane succour : Sign'd with the blood of more than ten millions of Martyrs : Render'd famous for the purity, innocency, and sanctity of its numberless Professors, and for the admirable correspondency of its Verities with Reason : Seal'd with a thousand and a thousand Miracles in Heaven, in Earth, on the Sea, done in confirmation of its celestial Doctrine : And illustrated with the learned Commentaries of the most able, intelligent, and clear-sighted Wits of the whole world.

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This is that divine Gospel, which alone brought Piety into the world, where it was before unknown; which crush'd murtherous and adulterous Gods under the ruines of their Temples; which demolish'd prophane Altars, suppress'd Sacrifices of Humane blood, destroy'd Amphi-theaters, where they gloried to tear Men in pieces; which confounded Witch-Crafts, tam'd Pride, quail'd Covetousness, stopt the inundations of Luxury, repress'd extravagancies of Ambition, choak'd enraged desires of Avarice, and turn'd a land of Tygers, Leopards, and fiery Serpents into a Paradise of delights. It is that, which drew from Heaven all the Vertues, whereof some had before been unheard of, others contemn'd, the rest persecuted. It is that, which taught Virginity, Chastity, Modesty, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude. That, which discover'd true Prudence, which open'd the sources of Contemplation, which furnish'd out the Hoast of religious Orders, which brake so many Chains of the world, traml'd under foot so many Idols of *gold* and *silver*, seated Poverty in the Throne of glory, erected statues of Innocency, establish'd Purity even in thoughts. That infine, which made known to men true Humility, Charity, Patience, Mansuetude, and love of Euemies; Vertues so noble, so elate, so heroick, that the Life alone of a Christian, being with conformity directed fairly to the doctrine of the Gospel, is a perpetual Miracle, able to convert worlds.

O sovereign Purity of the Evangelical Law! Law most worthy of God most Pure. Verily (Lord) thy Commandments are chaste and undefil'd. O that I might observe them perfectly, to become pure and immaculate from all deadly sins, and free from all imperfections! O that I might dye for the defense of these divine Verities! How willingly would I lay down my life, and shed every drop of blood in my body, be torn in a thousand

thousand pieces, and suffer a thousand deaths, swords, fires, torments, for following this Way, believing this Truth, loving this Life!

In what sense do Frier-Minors promise to observe the Gospel.

*Vid. Declar. Nic. III. & Clem. V.*

Not that we are bound under Precept, to observe the whole Gospel, that is, all its Counsels, in the same manner as its Precepts: But only those Counsels of the said Holy Gospel, that are here express'd in our Rule by way of Command, Prohibition, or by words Equivalent. But as for others, that are express'd therein by words of Admonition, Instruction, Counsel, Information; it is so much the more fitting we observe the same, beyond common Christians, and other Religious, by how much the more strictly we have chosen to imitate *Christ*, and renew in ourselves the lives and examples of his holy Apostles and prime Disciples. So that as they vow'd Obedience, Poverty, and Chastity; and besides, observ'd both these Counsels, Admonitions &c. contain'd here in our Rule, and others mention'd in the Gospel, after a more perfect manner: So are we in a more particular manner to endeavour to render ourselves like to them, making to shine in our Actions the same Evangelical Vertues, as much as we may, and humane frailty will permit; that God may be glorify'd by us, the only design of our Holy Founder in this his Evangelical Rule.

*In whom be all the Treasures of Wisdom and knowledge hid, in whom dwells all the fulness of the God-head corporally, Coloss. 2. 3, 9.*

*Of our Lord Jesus-Christ.*] The Saviour of the world, the Wisdom of the Eternal Father, the visible Image of a God invisible, the First-born of all Creatures, in whom, and by whom all things were made. Our Salvation, our Life, our Resurrection; the Light of the world, the Truth, the Way, and Gate of Heaven; the Wisdom, Power, Fountain and Treasure of all goods: All our Happiness is founded upon him, and all our good Actions have no other merit, than what is given them by his precious Blood. He is our Armour,

Armour, our Coat of mail, our Helmet, our Buckler. It is by him that we are deliver'd from the most dangerous Temptations. It is by him we acquire vertue to withstand all the Assaults of the Devil. If you would heal your Wounds, he is a Physician; if the heat of your Feaver burns you, he is a Fountain of living water; if the weight of your Iniquities oppresses you, he is Justice; if you be in Darkness, he is Light; if you desire to eat, he is heavenly Food; if you be weary, he is Repose; if you want help, he is Power; and if you apprehend Death, he is Life.

The incomparable Excellencies of the Person of our Saviour.

This is that *Jesus-Christ*, who has been able to contract all God's Extent under a little Clay, whose life was a flash of Lightning, his Word a Thunder, his virtues Lessons, his actions Prodigies. He was promis'd from the beginning of the world, preach'd thro' all Ages, given as a Pledge to the memory of all Mankind. So long before his coming, was appointed his Time, Birth, Life, and Death; he came at his prefix'd time, all environ'd with Prodigies and Miracles, all compos'd of Vertues, making Greatness to proceed out of the Lowliness of his humble and painful life, as Lightning-flashes break thro' the obscurity of Night; exalted by his *abasings*, enrich'd by his *poverty*, glorified by his *ignominy*, and eterniz'd by his *death*. This is that Lord *Jesus*, who makes a Paradise to spring from his Eyes; that *Jesus*, who distills honey from Lips of roses for the comfort of his Elect; that *Jesus*, who causes Nations to tremble under the force of his Word, as under flaming Arrows, and is attir'd with the conquest and trophies of Souls; that *Jesus*, who sits at the right hand of his Father, on the bright Empyrean Heaven, to whom all power is given both in Heaven and Earth, crown'd with a Diadem of honour, and revest'd with celestial Purple, who regards us, beholds us, and never

never ceases to draw us to him. So many Kings and Queens, Princes and Potentates of the earth have run after him, thro' Forrests, Thorns, and among Rocks, even to the abandoning of themselves and all they were worth. So many Millions of Souls, the wisest, the most purified, and most courageous on the Earth, have lov'd him, even to the suffering of flames and wheels, in the dislocation of bones, and the dismembring of their whole bodies, which they found replenish'd with a sweetness, that charm'd their pain in the sight of their best Beloved. For him *S. Stephen* preferr'd Stones before Flower-de-luces, and *S. Lawrence* burning Coals before a bed of Roses. For him *S. Bartholomew* despoil'd himself of his Skin as freely as of a Garment, and *S. Catharine* fastn'd to the Wheel arm'd with keen Razors, *S. Thecla* to Lions, and *S. Agnes* to the Wood-pile, *S. Cicely* to the sharp Sword, and *S. Apollonia* suffer'd her Teeth to be torn out with as much ease, as the Tree suffers its leaves to fall away from it. O the Sweetness of *Jesus*, who makes all the Valiant, and knows how to turn Doves into Eagles of fire! Shall we never understand, what it is to love him, towards whom all generous Hearts sigh, and for whom all Charities are crown'd with immortal Garlands? Were it not fit, we hereafter order the small Service we do him, as well in our Prayers, as Actions, in such sort, that there be neither Work, Word, nor Thought from morning till night, which has not all its accommodations, and is not squar'd within the Rule we have promis'd and vow'd to him, and which he desires of us, with intentions most purify'd, and indefatigable fervours.

O my beloved Lord *Jesus*, the most pure of all Beauties! It is for thee that so many generous Champions have peopl'd the

the Desarts, and pass'd the streams of bitterness and sorrow, bearing their Crosses after thee; and thereupon have felt the sweetness of thy Visits among their cruel Rigors. God forbid that I should give the Lye to so great, and so generous a Company. Behold, my dear Master, I come to thee, and will follow thee amongst Briars and Thorns; I will accompany thy divine Person in Life and Death, in Humility and Poverty, in Cold, Hunger, Thirst, and Nakedness: I will make much of thy Wounds, honour thy torments; I will conform my self to thee, that I may find joy amongst thy dolours, and life itself amidst thine infinite sufferings.

S. V. *Living in Obedience, without Propriety, and in Chastity.* ] These are the three Essential Vows, that compose a Religious State; which all those embrace, that undertake to follow Christ in the narrow path of Evangelical Perfection, wherof the Holy Gospel makes mention. Of Poverty, *If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell the things that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven.* Of Obedience, *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.* Of Chastity, *If any Man come to me, and hates not his Father and Mother, and Wife ..... he cannot be my Disciple.*

Moreover, our blessed Saviour himself, the Example and Master of all Perfection, the more effectually to animate us to the practice of these Evangelical Counsels, has been pleas'd most lively to express them in his own divine Person. Obedience, when he said: *My Meat is to do the will of my Father that sent me;* which he perform'd to that degree, as to become Obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. Poverty, when being Lord and Master of the whole Universe, he disdain'd not to become Needy for our sakes, *that by his Poverty we might be Rich.* He was born poor, liv'd poor, and dy'd poor; ha-

*Vow ye, and render to our Lord your God.*  
Ps. 75. 12.  
*The Vows of the Just are acceptable to him.* Prov. 15. 8.

Math. 19. 21.

Luc. 9. 23.  
Luc. 14. 26.

Joan. 4. 34.

Philip. 2. 8.

2. Cor. 8. 9.

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Math. 8. 20.

ving not so much as a Hole to put his head in according to that, *The Foxes have dens, and the Fowls of the air nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head.* And lastly, Chastity, that sublime and Angelical Vertue, so much admir'd, and exceeding the lives of the Patriarchs and Prophets of the old Law, he has also been pleas'd to recommend it to us, as well in his Conception and Birth, as during the Course of his Life; having been conceiv'd by the *Holy Ghost*, born of a Virgin, and led a Life so pure and unspotted, that even his greatest Enemies, who were ever prying into his Actions, found not any thing to carp at in this Matter.

Two Ways  
to Heaven.

Math. 19. 17.

From this it appears, that there are two sorts of Lives prescrib'd in the Gospel for attaining Everlasting Happiness. One, absolutely necessary, and common to all Christians, which consists in keeping the Commandments, as well those of Faith, as of Manners, deliver'd particularly in the 5. 6. and 7. Chapters of *S. Mathew*, and in the *Decalogue*: Of which our Saviour spake to the Young Man that ask'd him, *What he should do to have life everlasting?* To whom he answer'd; *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.* The Other is proper to Religious, who in a particular manner consecrate themselves to the Divine Service; imitating therein the Apostles and *Christ's* prime Disciples, who follow'd their Master in the strait way of the Gospel, living in Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. And this kind of Life our Saviour express'd in his discourse with the same Young Man; for when the Young Man reply'd, *All these (towit the Commandments) I have kept from my Youth; what is yet wanting to me?* Jesus said to him, *if thou wilt be Perfect, go, Sell the things that thou hast &c.* And these are the Evangelical Counsels; so call'd in regard of the Faithful in general, because

because they leave them the liberty of rejecting, or embracing them. Tho' in respect of Such, as upon a pious resolution taken to follow *Christ* and his Apostles, as we said, in the way of Perfection, have profess'd and solemnly oblig'd themselves by Vow to the performance thereof, they remain no longer Counsels, but pass into Commandments and Precepts of obligation: So that if they transgress them after their Vows are made, they thereby incur the guilt of Sin, and commit a *Sacrilege*.

Wherefore, *If thou hast vow'd any thing to God, differ not to pay it; for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeases him. But what soever thou hast vow'd, pay it. And it is much better not to vow, than after a Vow not to perform the things promis'd.* We are free indeed to make Vows, but after they are made, we are oblig'd to render them. For as *Tertullian* says, a Vow when it is accepted of by God, becomes a Law by the authority of him that accepted it; who by approving the fact, commands it for the future to be done. Of the same opinion is his Scholar *S. Cyprian*, in his Book *de Hab. & Discipl. Virginum*. And *S. Austin* likewise, who says: Before thou hadst promis'd the thing, it was in thyn own power; but whosoever shall make a Vow, and not perform it, let him not think, that corporal Death will suffice to expiate his fault, but it shall be punish'd with Everlasting Fire.

*Ecclef. 1. 3.*

*Adversus Pse-  
chicos Cap. 11.*

*Serm. 12.*

O blessed *Jesus*, Doctor and Saviour of the world, who wast pleas'd not only to teach, but by thine own most holy Example also to go before and shew us the way of Perfection; I give thee all the thanks possibly I may for this so excellent manner of sanctifying Souls, and consecrating them to thy Divine Service by the means of Religious Vows. O profound Obedience! O sublime Poverty! O immaculate Chastity! Incomparable Vertues! Who will give me to embrace you with my whole Heart? Behold, my dear Master, I do here resolve

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from this very moment to follow thee in this narrow path of thy Evangelical Counsels, and to tie myself in an irrevocable and everlasting bond to the observance of them. Be graciously pleas'd to accept of this my Resolution, and powerfully assist me with thy holy Grace, that I may punctually perform what I promise to thy Glory.

The Happiness of a Religious State.

§. VI. Now if you desire to know, what Benefit you reap by these sacred Vows, and consequently what Obligation you have to Almighty God, for having call'd you to a Religious State; I answer: It is, that you may be able, ( which is a thing most Glorious ) to sacrifice yourself, and all that you have, to your Creator, in a most pure and perfect Holoçault; your *Goods* by the Vow of Poverty, your *Body* by the Vow of Chastity, and your *Soul* by the vow of Obedience; so by that means to have nothing to do, but to love and serve God all the days of your Life. For this reason it is, in the first place, that you make the vow of Chastity; whereby being disingag'd from the care of pleasing a Wife, of educating Children, and of governing a Family, you apply yourself to nothing els, but to render yourself more holy and more perfect in his sight. Again, it is for this end that you make the vow of Poverty, and renounce to Riches; that being also freed from the disquiets they occasion, which are like Thorns that choak the good Seed, you may endeavour to cause it to bring forth an abundant increase in your Heart, and there gather together the Treasures of divine Grace. And lastly, it is with this design, that you make the vow of Obedience, and renounce yourself and your own Will; to the end that having nothing more to put yourself in pain about concerning your own Conduct, and having intirely put the care thereof into the hands of your Superiour, who is charg'd with it, you think of nothing but that which regards your Spiritual Advancement.

§. VI. *The Happiness of their State.*

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O what Helps are these, Dear Brethren, to Perfection !  
 O the Happiness of a Religious State ! What advantageous  
 Means it affords us to heap up immense Treasures of Me-  
 rits for the world to come ? It ennobles all the Actions of  
 our whole life ; which by means of our Vows are conse-  
 crated to the Divinity, and made acts of Religion, the  
 most excellent of all Moral Vertues ; and thereby rais'd to  
 a degree of Perfection and Merit, far above all the Ver-  
 tuous actions done in the world without it. It renders us  
 firm and stable in our good Purposes, serving for a Counter-  
 poize to the volubility of our *Genius*, which otherwise is  
 so very mutable and subiect to change, that what we one  
 day embrace, we forgo another : But our Vows afford us  
 a remedy against this our Inconstancy, and impose a happy  
 Necessity upon us of going always forward in the way of  
 Perfection, without any hopes of ever returning again to  
 the Vanities of the world which we have left. This wi-  
 thout doubt is most acceptable to God, we taking by these  
 means, as much as lies in us, from ourselves even the  
 very Power of offending him ; and at the same time make  
 him an offering of the Fruit and the Tree, towit our  
 Liberty, both at once, than which nothing is more pre-  
 cious and dear to us. Infine, Here it is, says *S. Bernard*,  
 that we live more purely, fall seldomer, arise sooner,  
 walk with greater precaution, are refresh'd more frequently  
 with heavenly comforts, repose with greater security, dye  
 with greater confidence, are sooner purify'd from our de-  
 fects, and more gloriously recompenc'd. And in another  
 place speaking to Religious : Your Profession, says he, is  
 most sublime, it is higher than the Heavens, it is equal  
 to the Angels, it resembles Angelical Purity ; because you  
 have vow'd not only all kind of Sanctity, but also the  
 Perfection of all kind of Sanctity, even the highest Per-  
 E ij fection.

*Blessed are  
 they that dwell  
 in thy House,  
 O Lord ; for  
 ever and ever  
 they shall  
 praise thee.  
 Ps. 83. 5.*

*Serm. sup. Si-  
 mile est reg-  
 num celorum.*

*Ep. ad fr. de  
 Monte Dei.*

fection. It is for others to serve God, but for ye to be United to him; What name therefore shall I give ye, that is worthy of ye? Shall I call ye heavenly Men or earthly Angels? For thô ye live upon Earth, your conversation and your thoughts are in Heaven. For ye are no longer Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, but ye are fellow Citizens of the Saints, and the Domesticks of God. Ye are like to the blessed Spirits whom God gives us to be our Guard, and who so exercise themselves in their employments, that they never lose the sight of God. Behold the life of a true Religious Man; his Heart is in heaven, whilst his Body is upon earth. All his Entertainment, all his Conversation, is either of God, or of things belonging to God, and he may truly say with the Apostle, *Christ is my Life.*

*Ephes. 2. 19.*

*Philip. 1. 21.*

The vows of Religion have the same effect as *Baptism* and *Martyrdom*.

*Her. sup. Ezech.*

*S. Thom. 2. 2. q. ult. art. 3.*

*Dan. 4. 24.*

*Rom. 20.*

Again, this giving of ourselves intirely to God by the help of Religious Vows, is of so great Virtue and Merit in his sight, that *S. Hierom*, and other Holy Fathers honour it with the title of a second *Baptism*; and Divines hold, that thereby an intire Remission of all sins is obtain'd: So that if we should happen presently to dye, after our Profession is made, we should not pass thro' the fire of Purgatory, but go strait to Heaven, as they do, who dye as soon as they have receiv'd *Baptism*; it being of the same efficacy, and ascapable of satisfying the Justice of God, for the punishment due to our Sins. This truth is very solid, and grounded upon Texts of holy Scripture: *Redeem your sins by Almes*, said *Daniel* to *Nabuchodonazar*. Now if by Almes, which are only a distribution of some Part of those goods we possess, we may satisfy for our sins; after what manner ought we to believe we satisfy for them, by an intire Donation of all that we have? Wherefore *S. Gregory*, upon *Ezekiel*, says, that Worldlings

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lings in distributing Part of their goods to the Poor, offer a *Sacrifice* to God of their goods; but Religious by intirely spoiling themselves of their goods for the love of God, offer to him an *Holocaust*, which is a thing far more excellent, than that of a *Sacrifice*. But if the leaving only of Riches is a thing of so great Merit, that the Saviour of the world promises for it a *Treasure in Heaven*; how great is the intire abandoning of Ourselves, the abandoning our Body by the vow of Chastity, and the abandoning our Will and Liberty, by the vow of Obedience? What will it be, continually to renounce ourselves, and to mortify ourselves for the love of God without ceasing? For the life of a Religious Person is, continually to carry in his body the marks of the sufferings of *Jesus-Christ*. Which made the Saints to compare it to *Martyrdom*; which is so heroical an act of Love, that a more excellent one is not to be imagin'd; *No body can have a greater Love*, says our Saviour, *than to lay down his Life for his Friends*. And in effect, a Religious life, particularly in our Order, is a continual *Martyrdom*; which as a certain holy Father says, has something indeed less terrible than that of the Body rent and disfigur'd with Torments; but it is also more troublesome, by reason it lasts longer. That which Tyrants inflicted upon the Faithful was ended by the blow of a Sword, but that of a Religious Person is not ended by one blow, it is a long sufferance which is daily reviv'd in us; sometimes by debasing our Pride, sometimes by annulling our Will, sometimes by macerating the Body; in such manner that we may say with the Psalmist, *For thy sake, O Lord, we are daily Mortified or put to death, and are look'd upon as Sheep led to the slaughter*. What wonder then, if this Oblation which a Religious Man makes to

God

*Math. 19. 27.*

*2. Cor. 4. 10.*

*Joan. 15. 13.*

*Bern. serm 3.  
sup. Cant.*

*Psf. 43. 22.*

God by means of his Vows , does , like *Baptism* and *Martyrdom* , obtain for him an intire Remission of his Sins , and of the Pain due to them !

The Evangelical Counsels help us to keep the Commandments.

Moreover , these Evangelical Counsels have also this Advantage , that they help us to observe the Commandments of God ; because the keeping of them , becomes very easy to him that tends to the perfection of Evangelical Counsels : Whereas on the contrary , he who has no mind to follow the perfection of the Counsels , is not near so exact nor faithful , in the observing of the Commandments. This is the sense which *S. Thomas* gives to these words of our Saviour in the Gospel , *Verily I say to you , that a Rich Man will very hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* Do you know why it is so hard , says the holy Doctor ? It is because it is so hard to observe the Precepts that lead to this kingdom , unless we follow the Counsels , and make a renunciation of Riches. The observance of the Counsels , on the other side , renders the observance of the Commandments far more easy ; because it is certain , that to renounce , for Example , all the goods of the Earth , and thereby , being capable of possessing nothing as our Own , hinders us very much from coveting to have the goods of our Neighbour ; and so of the rest. Wherefore the Saints take notice , that the Evangelical Counsels , and the Rules of a religious Life , are so far from being a heavy burthen , that they are even a help , and an admirable Support , to assist us to bear more easily , the yoke of God's Commandments.

*Quodlib. 4.  
art. 23.*

*Serm. 22. de  
Verb. Apost.*

*S. Austin* speaking of the easiness of the law of Grace , explicates this by two excellent Comparisons ; he compares it to the wings of a Bird , and to the wheels of a Chariot. The wings , says he , are no burthen or hinderance at all to Birds , they on the contrary help to render them less heavy ,

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heavy, and even make them able to fly : The wheels of a Chariot add no heaviness at all to the weight, or any incommodity to the Chariot ; but on the contrary, they afford great ease and help, to the Beasts that draw it ; and without them, they would not be able to draw half the weight they do. We may say the very same of Evangelical Counsels, they are so far from being a burthen or hinderance to us, that they are Wings that make us fly towards Heaven ; they are Wheels that help us, to bear more easily, the yoke of the Law of God ; whilst People in the world, who have not the same advantages, bear it with a great deal of pain, groaning under the burthen, and oftentimes even falling under it. All this ought to inspire great sentiments of Gratitude in us towards God, and excite us to render an infinity of Thanks to him, for having call'd us to so secure, and happy a State. Do you think that it is a small matter, that whilst others are in the Lists, expos'd to a thousand Dangers, that you are in a place of Security, only looking on ; that whilst they are in the Sea, weather-beaten by winds and tempests, you are at repose in the Haven ; and whilst they are toss'd, and turmoiling themselves in the midst of the waves of *Babylon*, the torrent of which carries them away, that you repose in peace and tranquillity upon the Bank ?

Let us also add to these Considerations, the more perfectly to understand the Happiness of a Religious State, and the Obligation we owe to Almighty God for having call'd us thereto, the greatness of the Reward, which he promises to all such as embrace this Course of Life. I speak not here of the Recompence of the other World, which is Everlasting Happiness, and the Honour of sitting as Judges with *Christ* at the last Day to judge the world, as is express'd in *S. Matthew* 12. 28, 29. I only speak of the

- Reward

The Temporal Benefits which we receive by being Religious.



Mat. 10. 29.

Reward of this present Life, which Religious Persons enjoy even now at this time, and that with considerable Interest; as is most manifest by our Blessed Saviour's own words in *S. Mark*, where in exprefs terms he says: *There is no Man which has left House, or Brethren? or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Children, or Lands for me and for the Gospel, that shall not receive an hundred times so much now in this time; Houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands.* This we will make clear to you by an exact enumeration of Parts.

First, you have left a House for the love of *Christ*, and in place of that, God has given you a great many; yea as many as there are Convents in the Order, which are almost innumerable: You have forsaken Father and Mother, but find a great many other Fathers, who love you much more tenderly than the former, take more care of you, and are much more solicitous for your good: You have abandon'd a few Carnal Children, and you find hundreds of Spiritual ones for them: You have quitted your Brothers, and God has given you others in their place, who have a greater love and kindness, and is a more refin'd and Spiritual love, since they have it for God's sake, and without any design or interest; whereas your Brothers in the world, scarce lov'd you any longer than they had occasion to make use of you, in order to serve their own ends: You have left those who waited upon you in the world, and perhaps had not any such to leave, however now you find a great number always employ'd in your Service; One serves you as your Porter, another as your Cook, a third as your Brewer, a fourth as your Gardener, a fifth as your Tailor, a sixth tends you when you are Sick, &c. And what is more, should you travel into *Spain, France, Italy, Germany,*

S. VI. *The Happiness of their State.*

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many, nay even to the *Indies*, or any other place in the world, you would always find a House ready to receive you, and the same Attendance to wait upon you; which is an honour and an advantage, that never a Prince in the world can boast of. Is not this to receive a hundred fold, and more than a hundred fold, even in this Life?

What shall I say now of the Riches you have left? Have you not much more in Religion than in the World? For you are more a Master of worldly Riches, than those are who possess them; since they are rather Slaves, than Masters; which makes the royal Prophet call them, *Men of Riches*; as if he would say, their Riches do not belong

*Pf. 75. 4.*

to them, but they to their Riches; since their Riches command and domineer over them: They continually take pains to get, to increase, and keep their Riches; and the more they have, the more uneasy they are, and become the greater Slaves; *Their wealth, says Salomon, even robs*

*Ecclef. 5. 11.*

*them of their sleep.* On the contrary, Religious Men, tho' never so poor by Profession, have every thing they want, without the trouble of knowing, whether it be dear or cheap, or whether the Year be scarce or plentiful; and they live, to make use of *S. Paul's* terms, *As having nothing, yet possessing all things.* As for Satisfaction

*2. Cor. 6. 10.*

of Mind, you have a hundred times more in Religion, than you would have had in the World. Ask worldly Persons, and those whom you think most satisfy'd with their Condition, and you will find them hourly expos'd to a thousand Misfortunes and Disquiets, from which Religious Persons are exempt: As to Honour you have it done you much more in a Religious Habit, than in a Secular. Princes, Lords, Bishops, and Magistrates, which perhaps would not have taken notice of you before, now pay you a deference and respect, upon the account of the

F

Habit

Habit you wear. And God gives you much more peace and quiet in Religion, than the World can give, and thereby returns with Interest what ever you quitted in the World, for his sake.

But upon what account do's God treat Religious thus, and shew himself so liberal towards them? It is, because they are disingag'd from all things of this World, and think of nothing but Heaven. The Time they would have spent in providing necessaries for their Bodies in the world, is now imploy'd in rendering themselves more pleasing to God, and hourly increasing in Vertue and Perfection. This is what the *Psalmist* testifies, when he says, *God gave the Nations of the Gentils to the Children of Israel, they possess'd the labours of other people, that they might keep his Commandments and observe his Law.* It is for this reason that God himself speaks thus by the mouth of *Ezechiel* concerning Priests; *There shall be no inheritance assign'd them, I my self am their Portion; you shall not give them any possessions in Israel, I am their possession, and inheritance.* Thrice happy Portion of Religious Persons, to whom God himself is their portion and inheritance! So that we can truly say with the Royal Prophet, *My Part is fallen very well to me, and the Inheritance which has happen'd to me is admirable.* Our Condition is much to be preferr'd before that of our Brethren in the world; for they have Earth, and we Heaven for our portion; God himself is our lot and possession. *Thou art the part of my Inheritance, O my God. Thou art the God of my Heart, and my portion for Eternity.*

*Pf. 104. 43.*  
*Ezech. 44. 28.*  
*Pf. 15. 6.*  
*Pf. 15. 5.*  
*Pf. 72. 26.*

O Sovereign Master! I render thee all possible thanks, for that thou hast chosen me to be thy Disciple in this School of Perfection, leaving many others that much better deserv'd it than I. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd to call me to a State so high,

S. VI. *The Happiness of their State.* 43  
 high, and for so noble and excellent Ends, Grant, I beseech thee, that my Life be not base and abject, but that the sublimity of my Manners be consonant to the sublimity of my Calling, thereby to merit the sublimity of thy Glory.

For Conclusion of the Exposition upon the present Text, observe, that the three foresaid Evangelical Counsels, as they are here generally taken, are indifferent and common to all Religious Orders; but as they are peculiar to *Friars-Minors*, you will see them Modified below in their respective Places. Holy *Poverty*, Chap. IV. and VI. *Obedience*, Chap. X. *Chastity*, Chap. XI. Where they are specified and distinguish'd from those of other Institutes: And by that means you will come to understand the excellency and sublime perfection of your Profession, and what things are requir'd of you in particular. Which variety and distinction of Vows greatly contributes to the Honour of God, who thereby is serv'd so many different ways; and to the Ornament of the Catholick Church, and sures excellently well with the various humours and dispositions of Men, who are not all delighted with the same Way of living, nor able to undergo the same Austerities.

S. VII. *Brother Francis.* ] Not as a particular Person, but as Founder of this Fraternity. *Promises.* ] In the Name of the whole Fraternity, both for himself and his Brethren. *Obedience, and Reverence to our Lord Honorius the Pope.* ] Now sitting in the Chair of *S. Peter. And to his Successors Canonically Elected.* ] Lawfully chosen according to the approv'd Form of the Ecclesiastical Canons. *And to the Roman Church.* ] To a General Council, when the Holy Sea is Vacant; or to the sacred College of Cardinals, these Venerable Persons representing the Church, and holding the place of the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord.

Note.

*The Mind of the lust Man meditates Obedience.*  
*Prov. 15. 28.*

*In the midst of the Brethren their Ruler shall be in Honour; and they that fear our Lord shall be in his Eyes.*  
*Eccli. 10. 24.*

Fij Upon

S. Francis his  
Order the  
First that made  
this Vow of Obedi-  
ence to the Po-  
pe.  
The Pope's  
Prerogatives.  
*Math. 16. 18,*  
*19.*

*Joan. 21. 16, 18.*

*Luc. 22. 31, 32.*

Upon this, *Bellarmin* has observ'd, that our Holy Father is the first Founder of any Religious Order in the Church of God, that made an explicate or formal vow of Obedience to the Pope, acknowledging therein the Primacy of *S. Peter*, to whom our Saviour spake in particular, with Preference to the other Apostles, when he said: *Thou art Peter: And upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And whatsoever thou shalt loose in Earth, it shall be loos'd also in Heaven.* And, *Feed my Lambs; Feed my Sheep.* And again: *Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has requir'd to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat.: But I have pray'd for thee, that thy Faith fail not: And thou once converted, confirm thy Brethren.* In all which Prerogatives the Bishops of *Rome* succeed *S. Peter*, as descending from him in a direct and uninterrupted Line, and sitting in the same Apostolical Chair. And these are they that have always accepted the Obedience of the *Frier-Minors*, from *Innoc. III.* to this day, as due to them; and in a particular manner have acknowledg'd them for their Children, exercising the office of Governour, Protector, and Corrector of this Fraternity, either immediately by themselves, or by one of the Cardinals as their Delegates.

What we are  
oblig'd to by  
this Obe-  
dience.

From whence it follows, that the whole Order, and every particular Brother thereof, besides their vow of Obedience common with other Religious, and which is due to the Pope's Holiness as Chief General of all Religious Orders, are oblig'd in a special manner by vertue of this Promise, to obey and reverence the said Pope, and the *Roman Church*; in such sort, that if any of us refuse to obey their Commands, comply with their Ordinations, Decrees, Bulls &c. Or shew any disrespect, irreverence, or contempt of their sacred Persons, either by sign, word  
or

or action ; he do's besides those Sins which other Christians commit by being Irreverent and Disobedient to their supreme Pastor, and Regulars to their chief General, sin in particular against this Promise. Which is here expressly added, as the *Seraphical Doctor* upon this place observes, of purpose to render our Obedience and Reverence ( which is most iustly due to the Church of *Rome*, as the Mistress of all Churches, *Christ's* Spouse, and the pillar of Truth ; and to the Pope's Holiness, by reason of the sublime dignity of his Office, being the Lord's Anointed, *Christ's* Vicar, the Oracle of Christendom, universal Pastor and Ruler of the Faithful, and the supreme General of all Religious Orders ) on our parts more Firm, and more Meritorious. Into whose hands therefore our Holy Founder commits most intirely both Himself and his Followers, to be rul'd, govern'd, and directed by his said Holiness ; for him to make Statutes and Laws in the Order, to compose our Differences, reform our Manners ; together with his Rule, by him ( as the Person above all others here upon Earth most divinely illuminated, and assisted by the *Holy Ghost* ) to be Moderated, Interpreted, Dispens'd ; as his Holiness, or the Church shall iudge fit. All which he may do, says *Bartholomæus Pisanus*, Here, not only in quality of supreme Pastor of the Church, but also by vertue of this solemn Promise made to him by our Founder. Which is greatly to be minded by tender Consciences, to satisfy their Scruples, and convince them that they ought to receive as Oracles of Truth what ever comes from the mouths of such Persons ; who having approv'd and confirm'd the Rule, are suppos'd to contain within their Breasts the true sense and meaning of the Founder : Seeing there is no Institute of what Religious Order soever, that has any force to oblige its Professors, but dependently of the

the intention, approbation and sense of the Church; which therefore has Right to expound and declare the true Meaning and Signification of every one; particularly of ours, which being the Marrow of the Gospel, ought to be subject to the same Authority and Interpretation, as the Gospel itself. Wherefore we must conclude upon all Points of our Rule, that sense to be the truest, and most conform to the intention of our Holy Founder, which is iudg'd such by the Catholick Church; and is by us firmly to be embrac'd as such, what ever to the contrary the Grammatical letter of the Text may sometimes suggest to our cloudy thoughts.

The Pope's  
Commands  
to be execu-  
ted with ha-  
zard of our  
lives.

Rom. 8. 39.

In Cap. 2. Reg.

Moreover this Obedience and Subiection to the Pope and the Roman Church, is so great, so strict, so absolute and universal, that we are bound to obey them in all things which are not evidently contrary to God and our Soul, even with manifest danger and loss of our Lives. In such sort, that every true Frier-Minor ought to endeavour to put himself in such a disposition, as to be able to say from his Heart that of the Apostle: *I am sure that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, neither things Present, nor things to Come, neither Might, nor Height, nor Depth, nor other Creature, shall be able to separate or disengage me from this sacred Bond.* Which made S. Bonaventure to say, that those who desire to be receiv'd amongst us, ought to be prepar'd to suffer *Martyrdom*. Because by virtue of this Promise, the Pope and the Church have full power and authority to dispose of us, as they shall see good for the honour of God and Religion, and send us, if occasion be, even to the remotest parts of the Earth, among Tygers and Leopards, the most brutish and savage Nations, thro' storms and tempests, and forlorn Desarts, and all the horrors and images of Death; with much greater reason, than

4. VII. *Their Obedience to te Pope.* 47

than a Captain may command his Souldier to scale the walls of a Town, or ingage the Enemy in battel, with manifest danger of his Life.

Wherefore, my Dear Brethren, let us beware how we fail in this so important a duty of our Profession. Let us stick close to the Holy *Roman*-Catholick Church, and its supreme Pastor, these rocks of Truth, amidst the perilous and various agitations of the Ocean, this Faithless, *Jansenistical*, and Libertine Age, tied fast thereto, by these two strong Cables of Reverence and Obedience; imitating the *Gusle*, a very wise Fish, who during Storms fixes herself firmly upon the Rocks without motion. Should Princes, Kings and Monarchs prove contumacious to the Apostolical Sea, and go from their Duty. Should Magistrates, Prelates, Bishops, Arch-bishops, Cardinals; yea whole Universities, Kingdoms and Commonwealths refuse to yield Respect and Obedience to the Pope's Holiness, and to execute his Commands, we *Frer-Minors*, his Children, will never depart from ours. As we have the Honour to be the *first* of any Religious in God's Church that have made such a Vow to him, so we will be the *last* in giving testimony of our fidelity and zeal to that most Holy Sea. We will espouse its Interest at all times, and in all places; be solicitous for its Welfare, pray for its Prosperity, stand up for its Honour, and defend its Rights and Prerogatives; we will shew ourselves resolute and undaunted in maintaining its Cause, ranking ourselves among the number of those Valiant ones, of whom it is said in the *Canticos*; *Behold threescore Valiants of the most valiant of Israel, compass the little Bed of Salomon; all holding Swords, and most cunning to Battels; every Man's Sword upon his Thigh for fears by night.* We are Poor People, and have nothing to lose, and therefore shall

The Brethren exhorted to the discharge of this Duty.

can. 3. 7.



shall stand more firm in time of Persecution. And by how much the more powerful the Enemies are that oppose the Church of God; so much the more will we exert our Forces to defend it. We will *pray* night and day, we will *speak, preach, dispute*, we will *arm* ourselves all manner of ways against its Adversaries; and if occasion be, we will not fail to expose our Lives for so good a Cause.

O *Jesus*! the Revealer of all Faith, and prime Author of all Truth. Thou hast espous'd to thy self, and establish'd for thy Servants an Infallible Church, as an unshaken Pillar to lean upon, as a solid Ground - work to build on, as a skilful Teacher and Suggester of all necessary Tenets, a Speaker by thy Spirit, and an Expounder of thy words. Behold here I will dwell, as in a place of Rest; in this Ark I fear no Shipwrack, in this Haven I may safely cast Anchor. In thy Bosom and Embraces, dear Mother, I remain secure and satisfy'd. I believe what thou tell'st me, admit what thou approv'st, reiect what thou refuseth. I hearken to thy Doctrine, as to the voice of the Divinity, and embrace thy holy Definitions, as so many heavenly Revelations; since the same Spirit, which spake to the world in the Apostles, continues in their Successors, which are, O most Holy *Rome*, City of God, thy present Pastors; from whose due Reverence and Obedience, so long as I breath, I will never depart one single Hair's breadth.

*Obey your Prelates, and be subject to them: for they watch, as being to render account for your Souls.*  
Heb. 13. 17.

§. VIII. *And the other Brethren are bound to Obey Brother Francis.* ] Being now Minister-General. *And his Successors.* ] All succeeding Minister-Generals; whom they are to acknowledge and obey, as their mediate Superiours; being immediately subject to their respective Guardians or Presidents, these to their Provincials, and the Provincials to the General, as the Head and supream Governour of the whole Order; which he rules and directs either by himself, or by his Commissaries. And this Obedience of all the Brethren to their General, is the foundation of our

*Sera-*

*Seraphical Religion*; for by means of it, all the Professors thereof are united together in a strong and indissoluble bond, as Members under one Head; and by the same, the whole Order is made one Body, one Spirit and Will, and one Fraternity: For it is properly Obedience that assembles, and ties Religious Persons together, and is the cause that divers wills and different judgments, make but one will and one judgment; insomuch, that Particular persons being depriv'd of their own wills by Obedience, there remains nothing but the Will of the Superiour, to which all others agree and conform themselves. Moreover, the Subjects being thus conform'd, and united to their Superiour, they are also in like manner conform'd and united one to another, according to that infallible Rule, *That all things which are the same in relation to a Third, are the same amongst Themselves*; and the greater Conformity they have with their Superiour, the more perfect also that will be, which they have amongst Themselves. And he is then to be esteem'd the true General, and *S. Francis's* lawful Successor, if in a right and uninterrupted Line he succeed him in Ministership-General, as the General of the *Observantines* do's at this Day: Or, if he be ordain'd and deputed such by the Pope's Holiness, in regard of some particular Congregation of the Order, as are the Generals of the *Cappucines*, and the *Conventuals*.

From hence ensues, that no Brother whatsoever of the Order of *S. Francis*, what ever Congregation he belongs to, that is lawfully erected by the Pope's authority, can exempt himself, by vertue of this present Text, from such a General's Obedience, tho' he succeed not our Holy Father in an uninterrupted Line. Neither is any one to be accounted a transgressor of Obedience, if obeying the General of his own Congregation, he refuse to obey any  
G other

Who is *S. Francis's* Successor, and General of the Order.

other General of those Congregations that shall be erected in this Confraternity.

O sweet Jesus, the Saviour of Souls, and exact Model of all Vertues, who humbl'd, abbreviated, and almost annihilated yourself in rendring yourself Obedient to death, even the death of the Cross: We humbly beg by the merit of this your sacred Obedience, that in imitation thereof, we may obey our Superiours in all things, as your Representatives; humbly, faithfully, readily, simply, and perseverantly; that so duly acquitting ourselves of this great Obligation incumbent on us, we may become Acceptable to your Divine Majesty, and deserve to be made Partakers with you in the other world of the ample Reward of this noble Vertue.

The Hierarchy of the Order.

1. Pope.
2. Cardinal-Protector.
3. General.
4. Provincials.
5. Custodes.
6. Guardians.
7. Preachers and Confessors.
8. Brothers.

§. IX By this, it is easy to see, in what consists the Hierarchy of our Seraphical Order, so wisely establish'd by our Holy Founder: Being a subordination and dependance of Inferiours to Superiours, and of these one to another, till we come to the General himself, and from him to the Cardinal-Protector, and thence to the Pope, who is the Source of all spiritual jurisdiction and power on Earth, whom all are bound to obey, particularly *Frier-Minors*, who by their Institute are in a special manner immediately subject to him, by reason of the fore-said vow of Obedience; and consequently are exempt from all other Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction inferiour to the Apostolical Sea.

This Obedience to *One* supream Head, is absolutely necessary in every condition and state of Life, so that no Politick Body can subsist without it. In Civil government, all are subject to Kings, Emperours, or to their Lieutenants and Deputies. In Ecclesiastical government, all People obey the Bishops in their respective Diocesses, and the Bishops themselves are subject to his Holiness, as the Head of the Church. The greatest Army submits to the authority of one General.

One

§. IX. *The Hierarchy of their Order.*

One Captain commands a Man of war. Every Family, every private House and poor Cottage, has always One whom the rest obey. And indeed there is neither House, Congregation, City, nor Kingdom, that can long subsist without it: *Every Kingdom, and House that is divided, shall become* Math. 12. 25. *desolate and ruinous*, says the Word of God. This order is not only practis'd among Men, but even amongst the Angels themselves, whereof one *Hierarchy* is subordinate to another. Nay, Irrationnal Creatures do likewise observe it; Bees have their king, and Cranes in their flight form this letter V, having always one to head and command the rest.

O Word Incarnate, Father of all blessed Unions, who hast establish'd an admirable *Hierarchy* in Heaven, and in thy Church Militant another in imitation of it, uniting all the Faithful under one supream visible Head, thy Vicar here on Earth: Bind us, we humbly beseech thee, to him in a chain of everlasting Obedience, and by him, to all our subordinate Superiours; that executing the Commands both of the one and other, and observing the Order thou hast appointed, we come at last to center and repose in thyself, the only Beginning and End of all Creatures, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, in the unity of One divine Nature, livest and reignest One God, world without End.





Of such as desire to lead this Life,  
and How they ought to be Receiv'd,

## C H A P. II.

*If any shall be willing to lead this Life, and shall come to our Brethren, let them send 'em to their Provincial Ministers: To Whom only, and not to others, be Leave granted to receive Brethren. And let the Ministers diligently examine them concerning the Catholick Faith, and the Sacraments of the Church. And if they believe all these things, and will faithfully profess them, and observe them constantly to the end: And have no Wives; or if they have, and their Wives be already enter'd into a Monastery, or have given them Leave, with the authority of the Bishop of the Diocess, they having made a vow of Continency, and that their Wives be of that Age that there can arise no Suspicion of them; let them declare to 'em the word of the Holy Gospel, That they go, and Sell all they have, and endeavour to distribute it to the Poor; Which if they cannot do, their good Will suffices. And let the Brethren take heed, and also their Ministers, that they be not Solicitous*

*Math. 19. 21.*

*Marc. 10. 21.*

*Luc. 18. 22.*

Solicitous for their Temporal goods, but leave them to deal freely with 'em what our Lord shall inspire them. Nevertheless if Counsel be requir'd, the Ministers have leave to send them to some that fear God, by whose advice their Goods may be given to the Poor. Afterward let them grant 'em the habit of Probation, to wit, two Tunicks without a Capuce, and a Girdle, and Brackets, and a Caparone unto the girdle; unless according to God it shall seem sometimes otherwise Expedient to the said Ministers. And their Year of Probation being ended, let them be receiv'd to Obedience, promising always to observe this Life and Rule. And in no case shall it be lawful for them to go out of this Religion, according to the Commandment of our Lord the Pope; For according to the Holy Gospel, No man that sets his hand to the Plough and looks back, is fit for the Kingdom of God. And they that have already promis'd Obedience, let them have one Tunick with a Capuce, and another without a Capuce, that will. And they that are forc'd by Necessity, may wear Shooes. And let all the Brethren be clad in Course Garments; And they may mend them with Sack-Cloath, and other Pieces, with the blessing of God. Whom I admonish and exhort not to despise, nor judge those People they see cloth'd in soft and colour'd Garments, and feed on delicate Meats and Drinks; but rather that every one judge, and despise himself.

LUC. 9. 62.

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## THE EXPOSITION.

Motives for embracing a religious State.

Sir, we desire to see Jesus. 10. 12. 21.

The Obligation of the Brethren in regard of such as ask the Habit.

§. I. **I**F any shall be willing. } Out of some religious Motive; such as is the Service of God, the Salvation of their Souls, doing Penance for their Sins, avoiding the Temptations and Snares of the World, the Meritorious Exercises of Poverty, Humility, Obedience &c. in a Religious State. To lead this Life. } Poor, contemptible, mortified, aultere, half-naked, despoil'd of all worldly comforts, pleasures, riches, dignities, and honours. And shall come to our Brethren. } Acquainting them with their pious Design. Here the Reader (if he be of the Order) that he may understand his Obligation relating to Novices, in this and the following Texts, is desir'd to call to mind what was said in the Preface, towit, That the Conditions which

are

are put in the Rule concerning the Habit of the Novices, and the manner of their Reception, and Profession, are all Obligatory. And therefore, *Let them.* ] The said Brethren, being oblig'd thereto, give the Suppliants a civil, cordial, and charitable Reception and Entertainment; and after a prudent and discreet Inquiry into their Vocation, Capacity, Motive, Intention, Parentage, &c. *Send them.* ] Either Personally, or present them by Writing, or some other way inform them how they may have Access. *To their Minister- Provincials.* ] Giving these a timely, and exact Account of all such Particulars, as is fitting for them to know.

*Suffer Little ones to come to me, and forbid them not; for the Kingdom of God is for such.*  
*Marc. 10. 14.*

Not that the Brethren are bound to send or present those, whom they assuredly know to be unfit; that is, such as have any Canonical Impediment: For even by the Law of nature they are oblig'd not to send such, lest the Fraternity by their means come to suffer Confusion and Disgrace; by being charg'd with persons that are insufficient for Preaching, hearing Confessions, and other duties of Religion. And therefore Pope *Nicolas III.* in his *Declaration* upon the Rule *Art. 3.* expressly says, Those only are to be receiv'd, that have sufficient Learning, Aptness, and such other Qualities as may render them useful to the Order, beneficial to Themselves by the Merit of their lives, and profitable to their Neighbours by their good Example. And with a great deal of reason: For seeing our Order cannot inherit the Temporal goods of those that present themselves, it is but just we inherit their Spirituals, as *Capacity, Piety, Industry, Learning,* and other Qualities, which may render them Commendable, and serve for their Portion; and not take all Fish that come to our Net; Idiots, *Ignoramus's*, idle Drones, men of no worth nor expectation, to be a burthen to Benefactors, to Ourselves, and to the Church

of



Eccli. 16. 1.

of God. The Wiseman gives us the same advice, when he says : *Reioyce not in impious Children, if they be multiplied : Neither be delighted upon them, if the fear of God be not in them. Credit not their life, and respect not their labours. For better is one fearing God, than a thousand impious Children. And it is more profitable to dye without Children, rather than to leave impious Children. By one Wise a Country shall be inhabited, and the Tribe of the impious shall be made desolate.* And again in another place : *Bring not every Man into thy House : For there be many trains of the deceitful Man. For turning good things into evil he lies in wait, and on the Elect he will lay a bloss.*

The Choice  
of Novices  
of very great  
Concern.

Novices are as so many young Setts, wherewith the Vineyard of Religion is to be recruited; which, if they be Choice and Select ones, will produce Fruits answerable to their Nature, will cause the Order to flourish, and bring forth plenty of delicious Wine; Charity, Devotion, Zeal of Souls, Obedience, and other Vertues, able to exhilarate the hearts both of God and Men. As on the contrary, if these Grafts be vitious, savage, wild, uncultivated; what may we expect from them, but harsh and sower fruits? Men of rude, undisciplin'd, and irreligious Tempers, that will dissipate, lay waste, and utterly destroy this our *Seraphical* Plantation, and render it useles, and contemptible to all the World. So that we must conclude, this Reception of Novices to the Order, and the well Manuring of them, to be of the greatest Concern of any thing that belongs to us; as being a thing, whereon the Conservation, or Destruction of the Provinces and Convents of the Order do's intirely depend; and therefore requires, that Superiours, whom it concerns, be extraordinary Nice in so critical a Point.

To

*To whom only.* ] As the Good-Men of the House, and therefore most concern'd for its Welfare; and as Fathers of the Province, who best know how to judge of the Qualities and Conditions of those that offer themselves; and lastly, as the most Conscientious, who will take care not to burthen the Order with unprofitable Members, at the solicitation and request of Relations, Friends, and Benefactors. *And not to others be Leave granted to receive Brethren.* ] Except the Minister, or Vicar-General, and the Commissary; or Vice-Commissary of the Family; to whom, by right and vertue of their Offices, it belongs to do in their respective Districts, what ever the inferiour Prelates can do; whose power of receiving Novices they also can modify, limit, or restrain: As likewise the Pope's Holiness, or a General Chapter, if they judge convenient. And accordingly our General *Constitutions* have ordain'd, that the Provincial-Ministers, tho Ordinaries in this Matter, shall no longer delegate this their power of receiving to the Order to any others whatsoever, but Themselves be oblig'd to examine, and receive Candidates, conform to this and the following Texts.

*Who, think'st thou, is a Faithful and Wise Servant, whom his Lord has appointed over his Family? Math. 24. 25.*

*C. 1. p. 24*

O Lord Jesus, Who with thine own Hand hast planted this our *Minoritical* Vineyard; thou the true Light, which illuminest every one coming into this World, vouchsafe particularly to assist our Prelates in this matter so important to us. Bestow on them the gift of discerning Spirits, for thy greater Glory, and the Honour of Religion.

§. II. *And let the Ministers diligently examine them concerning the Catholick Faith.* ] The Christian Doctrine; Faith being the ground and foundation of all Virtue and religious Perfection, according to that of the Apostle: *Without Faith it is impossible to please God; For he that comes to*

*Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits if they be of God. 1. Joan. 4. 1.*

H

God,

Heb. xi. 6.

L. 4. Orth.  
fid. c. 12.

Tract. de Pas.  
Dom. Tom. 3.

God, must believe that he is, and is a Rewarder to them that seek him. This is the first Step towards him. It is the Basis and principal Support of our spiritual Edifice, the beginning of Man's Salvation, without this no One can be register'd among the Children of God, all our endeavour without it will be in vain. Every thing depends upon Faith, says *S. John Damascen*, both in Civil and Ecclesiastical government. Neither do's the Husbandman without it so much as set a Shoot in the ground, nor the Marchant expose himself to the Ocean: No Marriages are made, nor other business of Concern among Men transacted, but upon trust, confidence, and faith. The Saviour of the World likewise would cure no Sick persons, nor admit any into his Sodality, without first examining them concerning their Belief and Confidence in him. For as a Physician, says *S. Athanasius* making visits to his Patients, first enquires of them, if they desire to be Cur'd; lest he undertaking them against their Wills, his Art prove ineffectuall, they struggling against the Remedies which he prescribes: Even so did our Lord demand of those he heal'd; neither did he confer any Favour, but only upon such that believ'd in him; and so by their own Faith, and his Blessing they were made Whole. For by Faith, a Man's aim and purpose is discover'd. Wherefore, *Let the Ministers diligently examine them concerning the Catholick Faith*; and they will soon see their Candidates intention and design in asking the Habit, and what they propose to themselves by embracing this Course of Life.

*And the Sacraments of the Church.* ] As to the Use and Frequentation of them, especially of *Penance*, and the Holy *Eucharist*. To know by that means, if the Candidates be good and devout Christians: For if they be lukewarm and tepid ones in the World, little good is to be expected

expected from them in Religion. If they want Faith and Devotion in the Ordinary duties of a Christian, how much more will they want them in the Extraordinary ones of a Religious State? In the exercises of Chastity, Poverty, Obedience, in going Bare-foot, in Praying, Watching, Fasting, in Hair-shirts, Disciplines, Silence &c. Things so difficult and hard, so contrary to flesh and blood, and thwarting the inclinations of our corrupt Nature. All which therefore require a most lively Faith, a strong and firm Hope, a confident Expectation of the blessings and rewards of our good Actions in the other World, and lastly a most fervent Charity and Love of God, for whose sake we undertake them.

5. III. *And if they believe all these things.* ] Certain'd in the said Christian Doctrine. *And will faithfully profess them.* ] With the loss of their Lives, by suffering Martyrdom for them, if it should be necessary for God's honour. *And observe them constantly to the end.* ] In a Regular Course of life, according to the Form deliver'd in the Holy Gospel, and summarily express'd here in our Rule. *And have not Wives.* ] With whom they have consummated Matrimony. *Or if they have, and their Wives be already enter'd into a Monastery.* ] And have made themselves Religious. *Or have given them Leave.* ] Matrimony being contracted by mutual Consent, it is fitting it should likewise be dissolv'd by mutual Consent of the Parties concern'd, to do neither of them wrong. *With the authority of the Bishop of the Diocess.* ] He being the ordinary Judge of Divorces, and other Separations between Man and Wife, within his Jurisdiction. *They having made a vow of Continency.* ] Which Vow ceases on the part of the Wife, at the Husband's going out. And is only requir'd of her in the present Case, to hinder her from going from her

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word :

*With the Heart we believe unto Justice : but with the Mouth Confession is made to Salvation.*

*And the Man that has done it, shall live in it. Rom. 10. 5, 10.*

*If any Man comes to me, and hates not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, . . . he cannot be my Disciple. Luc. 14. 26.*

word : Woman otherwise being of her own nature fickle, and subject to many *Metamorphoses* ; on whom therefore without a Vow there is no relying. *And that their Wives be of that Age.* ] Modest, and grave as to their Manners and way of conversation, tho they may be young in Years. *That there can arise no Suspicion of them.* ] No fear or danger of Scandal.

O Heavenly Father, from whom every good and perfect Gift proceeds, grant we humbly beseech thee, these holy Dispositions to all those whom thou vouchsafest to make choice of to serve thee in the Humility and Poverty of the Cross in our Seraphical Order. Give them *faith, devotion, continency, strength, courage, zeal*, and other Qualities becoming a Religious State : To the end that worthily serving thee here on Earth, they may deserve to enjoy thee everlastingly in Heaven.

What Conditions are requir'd by our Rule ; what by the Canons of the Church, for the Reception of Novices.

c. 1. p. 2.

But besides these Conditions here requir'd by our Holy Rule for the reception of Candidates, towit Faith, and the Disengagement from a Wife ; There are others requir'd by the *Canons* of the Church and the *Constitutions* of the Order, set down in the Table of Canonical Impediments, which the Ministers ought carefully to look into before they receive them. And likewise the Guardian and Discreets of the Convent, where the Noviceship is, to prevent all Mistakes in so weighty a Concern, according to our said *Constitutions*, are again to examine the Candidates about them before their Vestition. And they are these, Viz. If the said Candidates have been Confirm'd ? If Clerks, whether they have a Competent knowledge of the *Latin* tongue ? If they have sufficient Age ; that is, for Clerks 16, for Lay-Brothers 18 ? If they be Free ; that is, not Slaves or bound to serve any body, nor constrain'd by Fear, or Violence to embrace this Course of Life ? If they have no Debts to pay, nor Accompts to render ? If their Parents be able

to

to subsist without them ? If they be of good Fame and Reputation, that is, not notorious for any grievous Crime, or infamous Calling ; nor likewise their Parents ? If not born within four degrees of, *Jews, Turks, or Hereticks*, whose Bones or Statues have been publicly burnt in *odium fidei* ? If born in lawful Wedlock ? If sound of Body and Mind ; that is, not liable to any loathsome or infectious Distemper, nor to any notable Deformity, nor Brain-sick or wanting Judgment, or any considerable Member ? All which must be nicely examin'd, to the end Nothing may be admitted among us iniurious or burthensome to the Order, nor shameful and dishonourable to God and Religion, according to that of the Prophet : *Ye offer up polluted bread upon mine Altar ; and ye say, wherein have we polluted thee ? In that ye say, the Table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the Blind for Sacrifice, is it not evil ? And if ye offer the Lame and Sick, is it not evil ? Offer it now to thy Governour, will he be pleas'd with thee, or accept thy person ? Says the Lord of Hosts.*

*Malach. i. 7. •*

§. IV. *Let them.* ] The Ministers. *Declare to them the word of the Holy Gospel.* ] Inform them of the following Evangelical Precept ; which is to be done at the Novices first Coming, that they may not pretend Ignorance, and may have sufficient Time to conform themselves hereto before their Profession. *That they go, and sell all they have.* ] Without reserving to themselves any the least thing, Where is to be Noted, that the Substance or principal Obligation of this Precept consists in an intire Renunciation of all right and Civil possession of our temporal Goods ; but the Selling, or Giving them away to the Poor, is only an *Accessory* or less principal, and therefore may be omitted, as you will presently see, when it cannot be done

*If thou wilt be Perfect, go, sell the things that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have a Treasure in Heaven ; and come, follow me. Math. 19. 21.*

*Every one of without*

*you that do's  
not renounce  
all that he pos-  
sesses, cannot  
be my Disciple.  
Luc. 14. 33.*

The Reason  
of abando-  
ning our  
Temporals at  
our entrance  
into Reli-  
gion.

*Math. 19. 28.*

without difficulty, or some considerable prejudice; and an Abdication only or Renunciation absolutely commanded the Novices, as a necessary Condition to profess the Rule of *S. Francis*: Which is therefore requir'd of them, that so they may be able with greater ease and security, being freed from the care and disturbance of Worldly Goods, to run the way of God, and accompany their best-beloved *Christ Jesus* in his extreme Poverty, in the way of the Cross, in Humility, Mortification and Penance. And they that do it, will not fail to receive their Reward: *For I say to you, that you who have follow'd me, in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the seat of his Majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve Seats, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. And every one that has left House, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Lands for my Name sake; shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall possess Life Everlasting.*

*Math. 19. 21.*

Go then Young Man, if thou wilt be Perfect, and follow *Jesus-Christ* to Heaven, sell the things that thou hast here on Earth; make thyself Poor in imitation of him, who whilst he liv'd among us, had not whereon to lay his Head: *Foxes have their Dens, says he, and Birds their Nests, but the Son of Man has not whereon to rest his Head.* We come to Religion to engage our Spiritual Enemy, to combat and fight with the Devil, who is Poor and possesses nothing; Wherefore in like manner, we ought to deprive ourselves of all things, to fight against him. For he that wrestles with his Clothes on, against one that is Naked, is easily thrown; because he has so many things to lay hold on. Do you desire, says *S. Gregory*, to fight valiantly against the Devil? Throw off your Clothes, lest he throw you; for all Earthly things are no more than Clothes which do you harm; and he that has

*Mem. 32.*

has most of them, is soonest overcome; by reason of the advantage they give his Enemy. *S. Chrysostom* inquiring into the Causes of the zeal and fervour of the Primitive Church, and the tepidity and looseness of Christians in his Days, gives this reason for it. That the former depriv'd themselves of their Goods, to fight Naked against the Devil; but the latter fight in their Clothes; that is, they are charg'd with Plenty and Riches, which are very prejudicial to them in the Combat. But we are now disingag'd from all things that may hinder us from not being in a good Condition to fight against the Devil, and to follow *Jesus Christ*. And therefore the same Doctor says, that a Wrestler strips to play the better; He that would swim a River throws off his Clothes; and a Traveller on foot walks much easier, when he has Nothing to carry.

*Sup. illud Act.  
2. & Apposite  
sunt in die il-  
la Anime cir-  
citer tria mil-  
lia-*

O the supreme Science of *Christ* our Lord, which so much condemn't the things of the Earth, and so much esteem't those of Heaven. Teach me, dear Lord, this Science of Sciences, by the which I may esteem for Dung, whatsoever is Earthly, as the proper't Means to overcome mine Enemy and to purchase an Everlasting Crown. Wherefore O my Soul, after the Example of thy Saviour, abandon freely and cheerfully all thou art worth, for the Kingdom of Heaven. Leave all things for *Christ*, and thou shalt possess all things in *Christ*; for having him, thou hast all things in him, and being Poor for the love of him, thou shalt be much more Contented, than if thou didst abound in all the Riches and Delights of the World.

*And endeavour to distribute it to the Poor.*] Either to poor Relations; or to poor Religious, or to the Common poor, who are in a particular manner our Brethren; and therefore not to be forgotten by us upon this Occasion; being for the rest of our lives to be Fellow-Beggars together. Not that this Distribution is to be made by the No-  
vices

*He distribu-  
ted, he gave  
to the Poor:  
his Justice re-  
mains forever  
and ever. Ps.  
112. 10.*



The Distri-  
bution of  
the Novices  
Goods when  
to be made?

Sess. 25. de  
Regular. c. 16.

why to the  
Poor?

vices before their Vestition; but a little before their Profession only, two Months or thereabouts at the soonest; to the end, they may have the more liberty to go out, and return to the World if they please. For which cause also, if they make any Donations during their Noviceship, these are not to be Ratified, according to the Council of *Trent*, but on the Day of their Profession; they only then for good and all, dying to the World.

Now the Reasons which may excite you to bestow your Goods upon the Poor, amongst others are these. In the first place, these poor People, whose necessities you relieve, their Lives are most precious in the sight of God; they are the peculiar Object of his providential care, according to what the glorious *Hanna* has said in her Canticle, *The Poor of the earth belong to God*. He has number'd their Hairs, he has taken the task to preserve all their Bones, he moistens their daily Bread in tasteful sweetness, he diverts them from the apprehension of their Miseries, he fits them to their Conditions, he comforts their Labours, he crowns their Patience; and if he try them in the furnace of Tribulation, it is to render them more Pure and Acceptable to himself: So that by gaining the good wills of these Poor people, we shall raise to ourselves so many Friends, so many powerful Advocates, who will not fail in the evil Day, to beg of their Heavenly Father, *that we may be receiv'd into his Eternal Tabernacles*.

Luc. 16. 9.

Secondly, these poor People are our blessed Saviour's own Brethren, and most lively Images of the poverty, which he most mercifully vouchsaf'd to take upon him to enrich us. In such sort, that the Succour and Comfort we afford them by distributing among them our Goods, will be taken in the same manner, as exhibited immediately to his own Person, himself assuring us, *That what we do to one of these, we do to him*.

Math. 25. 40.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, they are likewise our Brethren, our own Flesh and Blood ; and we are bound to them by all the ties of Nature, and Grace ; being all made out of one mass of Clay, moulded by the same Omnipotent Hand, with a Soul infus'd into it of the same kind ; we partake together of the same Elements, breath one common Air, are expos'd to the same miseries in our Birth and Death ; we communicate in the same Sacraments, and are created all for one same Supernatural End. Now to oblige such as these, which are our Likes in all things, to do them Good, to relieve their Necessities, to give them our Substance, is a note of Divinity, said an Ancient, and there is no shorter way to Eternal Glory ; it being the nature of God himself to Give, and to do Good ; as the Fire to heat, and the Sun to illuminate. *Plin. l. 2. c. 7.*

Lastly, these Poor people, simple Ideots, and ignorant as they are, are nevertheless our Teachers, Doctors and Masters ; and therefore it is just, for a memorial of our Gratitude, we leave them what we have, at our Departure out of the world. For it is from them, we learn the true Practice of the two prime vertues of our Evangelical Rule, namely *Poverty* and *Humility*. See how these poor Creatures manage themselves, how penurious and frugal they are in Meat, Drink, Lodging, Cloaths, Utensils ; with how Little they pass their Lives, and with how much patience and cheerfulness they endure Hunger, Thirst, Nakedness, Heat, Cold, Rain, Wind, and other injuries of the Seasons. Observe again, how Humble they are, how free from Vain-glory, Pride and Ambition ; how ready to execute the most difficult Commands of Great-ones, and to undertake the vilest Offices, and Drudgeries among Mankind. And tho' they see themselves perpetually excluded from all publick Employes of the Common-wealth, they

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are no whit concern'd, but bear their abject and contemptible State with admirable patience, esteeming themselves unworthy of all Preferments, Honour and Respect.

These and the like Considerations raise in all generous Breasts, noble thoughts and affections of Tenderness and Compassion towards the Poor; and have mov'd our Brethren, not only to leave them all they had at their Entrance into Religion, but likewise afterwards to become Orators for them, to relieve their Necessities as much as their State would allow, to assist them in their Maladies, to comfort them in their Afflictions, and wipe away their Tears; and when nothing but Words were in their power, they fail'd not to sweeten with their discourse and charitable entertainments, the bitterness and acerbities of their necessitous and miserable Lives.

O sweet *Jesus*, Father and Protector of the Poor, and God of all Consolation! Impart to us, we most humbly beseech thee, this Spirit of charity, sweetness, and compassion towards our poor Brethren; who, tho' needy and indigent, are yet our Flesh and Blood; and thro' thy gracious bounty, our Co-heirs in thy celestial Glory. Remove far from us all arrogance, hardness of heartedness, harsh and churlish language in our Conversation towards them. Alas! We condemn ourselves as unworthy the Name we bear, when we despise those who are so Dear to thee, and hate Poverty as the greatest Misery: Since thou (O Glorious Redeemer) having once consecrated it upon the throne of thy Mainger, didst make it serve for thy Spouse during Life, and thy Bride-groom at the time of thy Death.

In What Cases are the Novices excus'd from making this Distribution?

*Which if they cannot do.* ] Without some considerable Prejudice to themselves or others, either Spiritual or Temporal: As, by reason their Possessions are loaded with Debts, or entangl'd with Law-suits; or for that the King or Government will not allow it, or the Poverty of their Parents permit.

permit it; or for that they fore-see such Distribution is like to occasion grudges, disputes, jealousies, animosities, hatred, envy &c. amongst their Kindred; or some other such like Impediment. *Their good Will suffices.* ] Their sincere Intention and preparation of Mind; of which they may make an Offering, God accepting in such case the Will for the Deed.

Where, for the better understanding of this Text, you must observe, that there are two things requir'd for that Poverty, whereof Religious Persons make profession. The first is, to part with all and leave ourselves nothing: The second is, not to retain any Inclination or Affection to what we had. And this second is most of all to be regarded; because it really disengages our Heart from the love of Riches, and puts us in a Condition of giving ourselves totally to God; and may perfectly be possess'd by him that abandons or leaves All he has for God's sake; be it more or less, or whether he gives much, or whether he gives little, or whether he gives nothing at all to the Poor; it suffices he leave his Affection to what he possess'd. And this chiefly is the good Will, which our Holy Founder assures us in the present Case will suffice, tho' the other of giving actually our Goods to the Poor cannot be had.

*S. Hierom* and *S. Gregory*, discoursing upon these words of *S. Peter*: *Behold we have left all*, treat this Subject admirably well. What a great piece of Confidence, says *S. Hierom*, was this in *S. Peter*! Tho' he had been but a Fisher-man, always poor, living upon his Trade, and getting his Bread by the sweat of his brow, yet with a great Confidence, he says, *We have left all*. Which he might very well do, says *S. Gregory*, for we are not to consider the Things he left, but the Will with which he left them; He left a great deal who reserv'd Nothing to himself: -

Religious Poverty consists, not so much in the actual leaving of Riches. as in the Will or desire of not possessing any.

*L. 2. Adver. Jojin.*

*Hom. 5. in Math.*

It is a great matter to quit All, tho' the things be very Inconsiderable that we leave. Do not we see with what a Passion we love what we already have, and how earnestly we search after what we have not? It is for this reason, that *S. Peter* and *S. Andrew* left Much; because they denied themselves even the Desire and Inclination of having any thing at all. This is no small Comfort for those, who for the reasons above cannot give what they have to the Poor; or who have forsaken only a Little, because they had no more to forsake. Which *S. Austin* likewise gives us assurance of. Tho' I have not been Rich, says this Holy Father, yet I shall not have the less Reward for that: For the Apostles, who have done the same thing with me, were no richer than I; he therefore leaves all the World, who leaves All he has, and the very Desire of ever having more. If for the love of God you forsake the Desire of a thing, you are justly said to leave it for his Sake; and therefore you forsake all Earthly things, if you forsake the Desire, not only of what you have or might have had, but even those things, to which your Affection might have led you; and by consequence you may rejoice, and say with the Apostles, *Behold we have left All*. On the contrary, he that was a Rich man in the world, ought not to glory the more upon this account, nor imagine that he has left more than another has done; for he has forsaken very Little, if he has not also forsaken the Thoughts and Desires of all Earthly things. Whereas he that had but a Little in the world, has left a great deal, if in leaving the Little he had, he has left the Desires of having what he had not. Behold wherein properly consists the nature of Evangelical Poverty, which our Holy Rule requires of our Candidates at their Profession; which is an absolute Disengagement of their Heart and Affection from all things of this world, whether

*ep. 89. ad  
Hilar.*

*Math. 19. 27.*

whether they give them to the Poor or not ; and a treading them under foot , by a generous Contempt of 'em ; being perswaded with the Apostle, *That if we can but gain Jesus-Christ , all the rest is but filth and ordure.* So that true Poverty of Spirit essentially imports, not only the bare depriving ourselves of all Earthly Goods , or giving them to the Poor ; but chiefly the cutting off, and destroying all Inclination, Desire, Will and Affection towards them in our Hearts.

*Philip. 3. 8.*

O my Soul do this, make yourself truly poor in Spirit, strip your Heart as well as your Body of all Earthly goods, that you may possess your Creator alone; and that having nothing in this world to divert your Affections from Jesus, you may raise and freely dilate yourself towards Heaven, the Treasury of real and immortal Riches; having happily exchange'd for them what ever you did, or might here have possess'd most costly and precious. You will then be able to glory, and say with the Prophet : *My God , what have I in Heaven but you ? And what is there on Earth that I prefer before you ? You are my portion and my inheritance, O my God, my Life, my Love, and my All.*

*Psf. 72. 25.*

*And let the Brethren take heed, and also their Ministers, that they be not sollicitous for their Temporal goods.*] Concern themselves with the Selling, Giving, Distributing, or Disposing of them in any kind. It being very incongruous and absurd, that those who at their Entrance into Religion, had renounc'd and condemn'd all Worldly things for Christ, should again afterwards have any Trouble or Care about them. *But leave them to deal freely with 'em, what our Lord shall inspire them.*] To the end, that their Reception to the Order, on the part of the Brethren, may be pure, holy and disinterests'd, without having an Eye towards their Goods ; but only regard the Novices themselves, as Persons to be enroll'd amongst them, in order to be consecrated.

*I would have you to be without carefulness : For the figure of this world passes away. 1. Cor. 7. 31, 32.*

*No man being a Souldier to God, intangles himself with secular business. 2. Tim. 2. 4.*

crated to the Divine Service. And therefore neither the Brethren, nor their Ministers shall do ought to hinder this freedom; either by Counsel or Entreaties, inciting them to give their Goods to this or that Relation or Acquaintance, or to bestow any thing by way of Alms upon this or that Convent. Neither shall they so much as insinuate to them the Necessities of their Convent, or do ought whereby they may be induc'd to give any thing to them, or to this or that poor Body in particular; but only to the Poor in general, as a Condition included in the Precept itself of distributing their goods to the Poor. In a word, they shall not in any manner be Sollicitous about their Candidates temporal Goods, to avoid distractions, scandal or suspicion of avarice, jealousies, debates, ill-wills, &c.

Nevertheless if the said Candidates be already resolv'd to leave some Legacy or Alms to the Convent out of their own Motion, it is lawful for the Brethren to receive it, after the manner of other Poor People; and also to propose a particular Necessity, for which it may be laid out; provided the Quantity be not so great, as may occasion Scandal or Disedification to any. Neither shall it be against the Rule, if, they being already determin'd to give something to their poor Kindred, or to other poor People, without determining any particular Person, the Brethren should propose some Person or Persons, so it be without Importunity; for our Blessed Founder's express will and intention is, that the Novices be left to their full Liberty, to do with their Goods, as God shall inspire them, according to Conscience, Religion, and Justice.

Wherefore I advise all my Brethren to be very Circumspect herein; for as the Wise Man says: *He that will handle Pisch, shall be defil'd therewith.* And therefore to the end, they may avoid all Occasion of offence, not to use any discourse

Scilicet. 13. 1.

Advice 10

course whatsoever to the Novices concerning their Means ; nor ask them any curious Questions, as *What they have ? How much it is ? In what Manner, and to Whom they intend to dispose of it,* and such like ? But let them be wholly Indifferent, and withdraw themselves from the Occasion as much as may be ; lest the Novices coming to discover the Brethrens Inclinations, debarr themselves of their own to comply with theirs, whom they fear to displease ; and so by that means give up so much of their Liberty, for which the Brethren must be Accountable, as acting contrary to this Text of their Rule, *Ut liberè faciant* : Which excludes on our parts, all solliciting, insinuating, inducing, petitioning, recommending, perswading, or whatever other Means, direct or indirect, which may seem to intrench upon the Novices Liberty. In such manner, that the Quality of the transgression against this present Text is to be accounted Venial or Mortal, according as the prejudice of the Novices Liberty, and the Scandal given to the world of suspicion of the Brethrens having a sinister Eye towards their Goods, is greater or lesser ; which two being forbid by the Law of God, are here confirm'd by our Holy Rule. Yet this hinders not, but that the Brethren without offence may admonish the Candidates, if they see that they employ their Goods idly and in vain uses, instead of bestowing them on the Poor, and put them in mind of their Duty in this point. They may also resolve their doubts, scruples, and cases of Conscience relating thereto.

the Brethren concerning the Distribution of the Novices Goods.

O my Soul, if thou art desirous in good earnest to serve God in the way of a true *Frier-Minor*, abandon all superfluous Cares of Earthly Goods, and trouble not thy self with those of other People : Seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and never permit such silly Trifles to robb thee of Everlasting Happiness. Glory that thou art dead and crucified to the World, and that the World

is.



is crucified and dead to thee; and live to God alone, as thou didst promise on the day of thy Profession.

*Nevertheless if Counsel be requir'd.* ] That the Goods of the Candidates, many times raw and unexperienc'd Young Men, may not be ill employ'd, abus'd, or fall a Prey to their covetous Relations, Tutors, Lawyers, and other Harpies to the prejudice of the Poor. *The Ministers-* ] Not Guardians, or any other of the Religious, to prevent abuses and indiscretions, which may easily be committed in the Choice of a person of that nature. *Have leave to send them.* ] Themselves remaining constantly employ'd and taken up in their Spiritual Functions, in imitation of the Apostles, according to that of the *Acts*. *It is not fit, that we leave the word of God, and serve Tables. Consider therefore, Brethren, seven Men of you of good Testimony, full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will be instant in Prayer, and the Ministry of the Word.*

*To some that fear God.* ] Some able, intelligent, discreet, conscientious Men; who, that this Distribution may be the more pure, and disinterress'd on the part of the Brethren, must not be any of the Order, nor Syndick of the Brethren, nor any Friend or one too much addicted and devoted to the Brethren, nor such as more regards the Novices Goods, than the benefiting his Soul. Neither shall it be One that has been before hand admonish'd by the Brethren what Counsel to give about this Distribution. *By whose Advice their Goods may be given to the Poor.* ] After the Manner above express'd, How, When, and to Whom.

*Let them be try'd first; and so let them minister, having no Crime.*  
2. Tim. 3. 10.

*S. V. Afterward.* ] After due Examination. *Let them.* ] The Ministers. *Grant them.* ] Supposing the Candidates have all the Conditions above mention'd. *The Habit of Probation.* ] Changing their Secular dress into that of Religion.

*Towis*

*Towit, two Tunicks without a Capuce, and a Girdle, and Brackets, and a Caparone to the Girdle.* ] Which the Ministers are oblig'd to grant them at their Requests. Here the Quality of the Novices Habit, as to its *Matter* and *Form*, not being specified, the custom of the Order, and practice of Provinces is to be follow'd. To fulfill this Precept it suffices, that the Novices be prov'd in the same Garments which the Profess'd wear, sutable to the austerity, courseness, and rigor of the Order; provided they have some Open Mark to distinguish them from those of the Profess'd Brethren: Which is altogether necessary, thereby to give the Novices to understand that they are not yet Incorporated in the Body of the Order, and by wearing the same Habit with the Profess'd that they cannot pretend to any presum'd or tacite Profession; which they might do, if they were permitted to wear altogether the same, without any Distinction, a whole Year together.

*Unless sometimes according to God it shall seem otherwise Expedient to the said Ministers.* ] Who then have power to dispense with the Novices in the rigor of the Habit of Probation; that is, when the Good of religion requires the same for the Edification of the people, upon the account of their eminency in Ecclesiastical Dignity, Learning, Nobility; or for the Novices own Spiritual Profit; towit, their more freely Exercising the functions of the mind in Prayer, Meditation and other practices of Piety, for want of health and strength of Body, &c. To which the rigor of the Habit, and other austerities of the Order are to give place, as to the End whereunto they are ordain'd; and therefore prudently to be intermitted, for so long as Superiours according to God and their Conscience shall judge them incompatible with other duties of Religion more perfect and important, according to Time; Place, , Persons, Employments, &c.

§. VI. This poor and simple Habit of our Order is greatly moving,

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For a Girdle there shall be a Cord, and for friz'd hair Baldness, and for a stomacher Hair-cloth. *I sai.* 3. 24.

How the Novices Habit differs from that of the Profess'd.

*As it were to Little ones in Christ, I gave you Milk to drink, not Meat; for you could not as yet.* 1. Cor. 3. 2. what Reasons are requir'd to dispense in the rigor of the Habit.

The Habit of  
the Order  
describ'd.

moving, and conduces very much towards exciting Devotion, Penance, and the Contempt of the world in the eyes and hearts of all our Beholders; yea it has gain'd so much Esteem and Veneration amongst Men, that even Popes, Kings, and Princes have desir'd to be Buried in it. We will here for the benefit of the Reader, give a short Explication of the several Parts thereof.

Tunicks.

First, the two *Tunicks*, which are made of course and rough woollen Cloth, to mortify the Body, being display'd, form the figure of a Cross, to represent our Saviour Crucified; and they hang loose and open on every side, as much as Modesty and civil Decency will allow (whereby we are expos'd to the Cold) to express our blessed Redeemer hanging Naked on the Cross. And we wear them Night and Day upon our backs without putting them off, as a perpetual Memorial of his said dear Passion, according to that of the Apostle: *Always bearing about in our Body the Mortification of Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus may be manifested in our Bodies.*

2. Cor. 4. 10.

My Crucified Lord Jesus! O that I could perfectly imitate thee in every passage of thy Life, the Pattern of all Vertue! O that I could imprint the lively Image of all the particulars of thy Venerable Passion, in my Heart as well as on my Body! O that I could fasten all my Affections and Imperfections to thy sacred Cross, drown all my Desires and Defects in thy dear wounds, put off my self, and put on thee wholly and intirely, O sacred Humanity of my suffering Saviour!

Girdle.

Our *Girdle*, is a common-rude-hempen-Cord, a Representation of that wherewith our Saviour at the time of his Passion vouchsaf'd to be bound for our Sins; such as we make use of to tie brute Beasts, lead Malefactors to the gallows, &c. And therefore it is very improper, yea absurd and irreligious to wear one made of fine white Thread, Wool,

Wool, or Cotton; as some sensual and effeminate Brothers do, wholly unmindful of their profession, and of the true signification of such a Girdle; which is to bind them as Criminals to make satisfaction for their Sins, to a Penitential State, and to the Obedience of their Superiour, as fast as our Redeemer was to the Pillar, when whipt and scourg'd by the Jews.

O Immaculate Lamb, who with admirable Meekness suffer'dst thy self to be bound with most Cruel Cords by the hands of Sinners! Bind me to thee, I beseech thee, so strongly with the Cords of Charity and Obedience, that no Scourges, nor temporal Torments be ever able to unloose me from thee.

Our *Brackets* or *Drawyers* are like those, whereof mention is made in the book of *Exodus*, in these words, *Thou shalt make also linnen Breeches, to cover the flesh of their Turpitude from the reins to the thighs.* And again in *Leviticus*, *He shall hide his Privities with linnen Femmorals.* And they denote, being made of white Cloth, the purity and innocency of our Lives, and put us in mind how excellent it ought to be, free from all carnal Concupiscence, and the filthiness of Lust; which was recommended to the Ministers of the Old law, but is much more to these of the New.

Brackets.  
*Exod. 28. 42.*

*Levit. 16. 4.*

The *Capuce* or *Caparone* which Novices wear, serves for a veil or cover to guard their Eyes; it is likewise a sign of grief and sorrow; it is also in place of a Fools cap or hood, the badge of religious Simplicity; to let them know, that they come to Religion to mortifie their Eyes, to lament and deplore their Sins, and to be made Fools for *Christ's* sake. Now by this *Caparone* is understood a Capuce with a certain piece of Cloth fast'd to it, and hanging down to the Girdle before, which they call a Tongue, to give the Novices to understand that they have no more a tongue in their Mouths, but hanging at their Breasts, and that they come to Reli-

Capuce or  
Caparone.

Kij gion

gion to keep strict Silence, and make satisfaction for all the idle Words of their life past : Others understand by a *Caparone*, a Capuce with a piece of Cloth hanging down both *before* and *behind* to the Girdle.

O sweet Redeemer ! What is represented to us in these two parts of our Dress, imprint effectually, we beseech thee, on our Thoughts and Manners; that by bridling our Tongues, mortifying our Eyes, and lamenting our Sins, we may arrive to that degree of Purity, as to be able to serve thee with a chaste Body, and please thee with a clean Heart.

Crown.

To all this we may add, for the Accomplishment of a religious Dress, the cutting off our Hair, and shaving our Heads in the form of a *Crown*; to signify, that at our entrance into Religion, we ought to cut away our Passions and vicious Inclinations, which are as the scum and superfluities of the Soul, as the Hairs are the superfluities of the Body; and that we learn to bear Derisions and Contempts, with the same Constancy and Cheerfulness our Saviour did his crown of Thorns, so to gain a crown of Glory; whereof the *Crown* on our Head is a figure, being of a Circular form without End, as denoting its Eternity.

O Sovereign King, and perpetual Triumpher ! I give thee humble thanks for the manner thou didst choose to gain the crown and triumph of Glory, by having a most painful Crown of Thorns plac'd on thy Head. O Glorious Vanquisher ! Grant me a compleat Victory over my Enemies, which are my Passions. I henceforth offer my self to be crown'd with Thorns for thy sake, hoping that thou wilt crown me for it one day with Everlasting Glory in the life to come.

Thus you see, Dear Brethren, all is Holy and Mysterious in Religion. Are not then those Religious, worthy of all shame and confusion, and do they not well deserve to receive their reward with Hypocrites in the other World, who setting aside all these pious Considerations, bely their Profession, neglect

A word to tepid Religious touching the Representation of their Habit.

neglect their Duty, and leading a loose and idle Life, take no care to express in their Manners, what is daily represented to them in their Habits: You shall hear what opinion *Dionys. Carthus.* has of such People. Although, says he, there are many things prescrib'd by the Rules and Constitutions of Religion, wherein if we fail, we do not presently commit a Mortal Sin; as to keep Silence, to come in due time to the Office and other acts of Community, to Meditate, keep our Cells, avoid Idleness, and the like; yet the daily Habit and Custom of neglecting them, without taking care to amend, or using any endeavour to tend to Perfection, by those means and ways prescrib'd by their Institutes, cannot in Religious Persons be excus'd from a Mortal Sin; by reason of a certain affected and deliberate Contempt, or obstinate Willfulness against Obedience and the orders of Superiours, which such continual Transgressions, tho' in themselves many times Light, carry along with them. And therefore those loose and irregular Spirits, which have little or no regard to their Rules, and the observance of religious Discipline, notwithstanding the frequent admonitions of Superiours; but give themselves wholly over to a daily neglect of their Duty, to a carnal and sensual Life, to worldly Vanities, to Idleness, and impertinent Discourses, fall into a number of sins, not only Venial, but Mortal also. Yea their whole Life is as it were one Continued sin; since even their good Actions, and the daily practices of Piety which they perform, such as Meditation, reciting the divine Office, saying Mass, &c. they do them so perfunctoriously, sluggishly, unduly, irreverently, that thereby they rather offend and provoke God, than honour or reconcile themselves to him. And in the end, come to that pass, that even of Mortal sins they make no scruple. Thus much the fore said Author. It was this bad conduct and scandalous behaviour of Religious Men, that gave:

*Lib. de Ref.  
Claus. Cap. 6.*

*Ep. ad Pleb.  
Hipp.*

*Thren. 4. 1.*

gave occasion to *S. Austin* to pronounce this remarkable Sentence: Since I began to serve God, says he, as I have seldom seen better Christians than those who have perfected themselves in Monasteries; so I have scarce found worse than those Religious, who have fallen in Monasteries. *S. Bernard* says, that there are very few of these, who return to the same State they were in, before they fell. And it is over such, that the Prophet *Jeremy* weeps and laments, when he says: *How is the best Gold obscur'd? How has it lost its colour and brightness? They who were brought up and nourish'd in Purple, are plung'd into filth and ordure.* Those upon whom God bestow'd so many Graces, so many spiritual Helps, who so frequently entertain'd themselves with him, whose chief Desires were in Heaven, have defil'd themselves with the dung and filth of the Earth.

Here blush, O my guilty Soul, and be really confounded for having so Pharisaically beloy'd your Apostolical Profession by your sensual actions, your extravagancies and criminal liberties; and like another repentant Prodigal return to your indulgent Father, beseeching him, that with the Pencil of his abundant Mercy he will please to renew that Image of a true *Frier-Minor*, which most ungratefully you have fully'd and defac'd. Resolve from hence forward to live correspondent to your holy Vocation; and by your regular and pious Conversation express the Sanctity of *Jesus*, the Holy of Holies, such as your Habit represents, and daily puts you in mind of.

The Education of Youth of very great moment.

§. VII. We will now speak something concerning the Education of our Novices, of the Manner of training them up in their Noviceship; then of their Masters; afterwards of their last Votes or admittance to their Profession: All which I will do with a Brevity answerable to what I propos'd to my self in this Treatise.

First, during this year of Probation, great care and industry is to be us'd in cultivating these tender Plants, which the Divine

Divine Providence furnishes us with for recruiting and keeping up our Order. *Hast thou Children ? Says the Wise Man, Instruct them, and bring them from their Childhood. He that teaches his Son, shall be prais'd in him, and in the midst of them of his Household he shall glory in him. He that teaches his Son, do's cast the Enemy into emulation, and in the midst of his Friends he shall glory in him. His Father is dead, and he is as it were not dead; for he has left behind him the like to himself.* It is an inestimable Blessing to have amongst us able Wits, Young men of good Capacities, docile Dispositions, promising Endowments; But it is the Order's business to cast them in its Mould, to fashion 'em, polish 'em, tutour 'em, give 'em such Maxims of Learning and Devotion; that they may one day shine as so many burning Lamps in the Church, to teach, preach, write, dispute &c. for the honour of God and Religion.

Eccli. 7. 25.

Eccli. 30. 2.

Good Education is of mighty Concern; for we are all, that almost which we have learn'd to be in our Tender years. These Young things at their first Coming among us, are susceptible of any Form, and like a piece of warm Wax easily moulded into what Shape you please. What is first imprinted in them, they more simply believe, more reverently receive, they relish it better, it sticks closer, and remains longer by them. It is easy in the beginning to bend a young Tree, and make it become Strait; but if it grow Crooked, and you let it alone, it will always remain so; and you will afterwards sooner break, than straiten it. It is the same in those of a tender Age; it is easy in the beginning to make them take a good Course, and to ply them to the model of Perfection: So that being accusom'd to it betimes, they afterwards find therein a great facility, and always persevere in it. And therefore, *It is good to carry the Yoke from our Youth.* For a *Young Man according to his way, when he is Old, will not depart*

Thren. 3. 27.

Prov. 22. 6.



*depart from it.* Stuff that is dy'd in the Wool, never looses its Colour: How is it possible, says *S. Hierom*, to change Wool that is dy'd Scarlet, into its first colour? An Earthen Pot retains a long time the smell of the first Liquor that is pour'd into it. As on the contrary, these Striplings, if they have the misfortune to be neglected in their Noviceship, and little or no Care taken to instruct them, during the Time they are under the Master, in things relating to the obligation of their State, they will always remain in their Ignorance. For *the things that thou hast not gather'd in thy Youth, how shalt thou find them in thy Old Age?*

*Eccli. 25. 5.*

What things  
are Novices  
to be instructed in.

Let then the Candidates of our Order have good religious Principles early instill'd into them; such Impressions as are suitable to their Calling, and best agreeing with the spirit of Penance, and with the rigor and austerity of the Order; true and sound Notions of *Poverty, Humility, Obedience, Modesty*, Vertues now rare among Novices, and young Religious. Let the horror and enormity of Sin, the vanity and danger of a corrupt World, the happiness and security of a Religious State, the terrour and uncertainty of Death, the severity of God's Judgments, the torments of Hell, the joys of Paradise &c. be frequently and seriously inculcated into them. Let them be taught the manner of Praying both Mentally and Vocally, of receiving the Sacraments, mortifying their Passions and Sensualities, purifying their Intentions. Let them be instructed in the Christian Doctrine, the obligations of the Rule, the Constitutions, Rites and Ceremonies of the Order, *S. Bonaventure's Speculum Disciplina*, and what ever else belongs to Regular Observance, and the Obligations they are to take upon them at their Profession; lest the Ignorance of what they should know, remain with them all their Life-time, to the confusion and disgrace of the Order, and their own Damnation.

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Wo be to that Province ! whose Novices are intrusted in the hands of an unskilful Master. There is nothing so fatal as the Neglect of Youth, which ; creeping into the most flourishing Convents of the Order from our Noviceships, depopulates and deprives them of good Members, and furnishes them with Shadows instead of Men, with Ghosts, Hobgoblins and Monsters of Religion. Young Men ill bred, says *S. John Chrysostom*, are more to be fear'd than the most savage and fiercest of Beasts. And *S. Bonaventure* assures us, that one of the chiefest reasons why so many famous Orders are confounded and fall to Decay, is the want of Discipline ; that young Religious, so soon as they are Profess'd, are left to themselves without a Bridle to keep them in, and hinder them from committing Mishief ; or for want of a Rod and a strict hand to compell them to their Duty. Which proceeds, either from a wilful Neglect, or from a pernicious Condescension and Connivance of their Rulers, who, out of a certain Pusillanimity or easiness of temper, are afraid to correct their Subjects for fear of displeasing them : After the manner of an imprudent Physician, who that he may not discompose and put his Patient out of humour, permitts him to eat what is Hurtful ; whereby his Distemper continues longer, and grows more violent upon him, and at last brings Death along with it. The *Wise Man* very much blames such Conduct as this in the managing of Youth, and shews the great Inconveniencies which ensue thereupon. *An untam'd Horse*, says he, *becomes stubborn, and a dissolute Child will become heady. Pamper thy Son, and he will make thee afraid : Play with him, and he will make thee sorrowful. Laugh not with him, lest thou be Sorry, and at the last thy Teeth shall be on edge. Curb his neck in his Youth, and Knock his sides whiles he is a Child, lest perhaps he be hardened, and believe thee not, and he shall be sorrow*

The want of  
Correc<sup>n</sup> fatal to  
Youth,

*Hom. 38. in  
Math.  
Lib. 1. de pro-  
fect. Relig.  
Cap. 1.*

*Eccli. 30. 8.*

*Prov. 29. 15.* sorrow of mind to thee. Rod and Rebuke give wisdom, says Solomon; but the Child, that is left to his own will, confounds his Mother. And again : *He that spares the Rod, hates his Child; but he that loves him, do's instantly correct him.* Know we not, that Punishment and Reward are the two most powerful Engines, which the Divine Providence makes use of in the government of the Universe ? And they are likewise necessary in all Societies, without which they will not any long time be able to subsist, as Experience sufficiently teaches. If at present, whilst the Passions of these young Striplings do but begin in them, and their bad Inclinations are still weak and tender, you have not the Courage to oppose them; how shall you be able to resist them, how will you be able to master them, when they shall be strengthn'd by Custom, and become so deeply Rooted in them, that you will not have power to overcome them with using a Violence even more cruel than Death ? If whilst the Difficulty is yet small, you dare not undertake to surmount it, what will you be able to do when it shall become greater ? And if at present whilst their Passion is but like a Lyon's Whelp, you have not the Courage to attack it, how will you be able to do it when it shall be grown a great and furious Beast ? Hold it therefore for a certain Truth, that if now these Young things, when they are but just hatcht as it were and scarce out of the Shell, are permitted to lead loose and tepid Lives, they will hereafter do the same in spite of your teeth : If now they be not good Novices, and good Apprentices, they will never hereafter for all you can do, be good Religious, nor good Work-Men : If at present they are Negligent thro' your fault in the things that belong to Obedience, and regard not the observance of Rules, they will continue afterwards still to become more Negligent : If at present they have little Care to perform their Spiritual Exercises

Exercises well, and if they perform them by peccemeals, they will continue to do the same thing during their whole Life, notwithstanding all your Endeavours to the contrary. All therefore consists in beginning well; for as *S. Bonaventure* observes in his *Speculum Disciplina*, we seldom quit those Impressions we receive Young; and he who in the beginning of a new kind of Life, contemns Discipline, will very hardly afterwards be brought to it in his riper Years.

*S. Dorothens* explicates this very well, by an Example he recounts of one of the Fathers in the Desert, who being one day with his Disciples in a place full of *Cypress* Trees of different bigness, commanded one of them to pluck up a Little one he pointed at, which his Disciple presently perform'd without any difficulty; then he pointed at another somewhat Bigger, which in like manner he pluck'd up by the Roots, but with far greater difficulty than the former, being forc'd to use both his Hands to do it. To pluck up another which was yet Stronger, he was forc'd to use the help of one of his Companions; and infine, All of them together labour'd in vain to pull up another, which was much Bigger than the former. Behold, says the Father, how it is with our Passions, and bad Inclinations; in the beginning when they are not yet Rooted, it is easy to master them, if we take but never so little pains; but afterwards when by a long Habit they have taken deeper Root in our Hearts, it is very hard to pull them out; then we use extraordinary Endeavours, and oftentimes shall not be able even thereby to compass it. This lets us see, how pernicious a thing, evil Education and the neglect of Youth in their Noviceship is to Religion, and that all its Hopes, and all its Happiness is wholly ruin'd and destroy'd thereby.

§. VIII. O who will give us, to prevent the disorders of evil Education in our *Seraphical* Order, some able Men

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*Doct. 11.*

The Conditions of a good Matter for of Novices.

Eccli. 44. 3.

Dan. 1. 4.

for Directors in our Noviceships ? *Ruling in their dominions, Men great for force, and endow'd with Wisdom, declaring in Prophets the dignity of Prophets; and by vertue of Wisdom, most holy words to the People. In their skill seeking out Musical Melodies, and uttering Songs of Scriptures. Rich Men in Vertue, studying beautifulnes: Living at peace in their Houses. In whom there is no Spot, beautiful of Form, and instructed in all Wisdom, Cunning in Knowledge, and taught in Discipline. Men vigilant, wise, experienc'd, mortified, grave, austere to themselves and indulgent to others: Men free from partiality, patient, mild, affable, pious, devout, and exemplar: Men prudent, industrious, quick sighted, who know how aptly to dive into the bottom of their Candidates Inclinations, to find out their Weak sides; to try them with Discretion, give to every one their Station answerable to their Capacity, prescribe proper Remedies for each Man's Distemper, help them to overcome their Temptations, master their Passions, and to make satisfaction for their own and their Benefactors sins, by Disciplines, Hair-shirts, Fasts, Watchings, Prayer, Solitude, Silence &c. In fine, Men who are Patterns of all good works; that their Young may have nothing to reproach them with; but may honour, love, and respect them, as their Masters and Fathers.*

O Holy Founder, most tender Father, and vigilant Pastor of your *Minoritical* Flock, obtain of blessed *Jesus* our Crucify'd Lord, an abundance of divine Unction upon all the Directors of Conscience, and Spiritual Masters of your Order, whereby they may become truly such; that so they may be able, by their religious Example, sage Conduct, and pious Education of the Youth committed to their Charge, to transmit to Posterity your *Seraphical* Spirit, and daily renew in us the edifying and mortify'd Lives of our first Fathers, your most holy Companions.

§. IX.

§. IX. Now as for what concerns the Novices admittance to their last Votes in order to their Profession, it is a ticklish Point, and of huge importance to the Fraternity; and therefore those Communities where Noviceships are, which by the *Statutes* have right to give Votes, cannot be too curious and circumspect in this Matter; wherein if they fail, they not only transgress an *Equipollent* of the Rule, but they sin also in divers other respects, to wit against Charity, which they owe to their Neighbours the Candidates; against Legal Justice, which obliges them to procure the good of the Province whereof they are Members, the best manner they are able; and lastly, against their own Selves, in betraying the Trust committed to them by the *Constitutions* of the Order. For first, by admitting one that is unfit for Religion, or rejecting a person of Merit and Expectation, both which are very Criminal, they are injurious to their Province, which by that means is frustrated of its Intention, and either depriv'd of profitable Members whereof it stands in need for its Support, or burthen'd with unprofitable ones to its Disgrace and Destruction. Again they are injurious to the Novice, who is sent back into the World with dishonour, and depriv'd of the Right which he has to his Profession, if he behave himself well; if ill, he is admitted to a Course of Life, which he will repent himself of as long as he lives, by undertaking a Task which he is unable to perform, and whereof he must one day render an Account. In fine they are injurious to Themselves, by being Faithless to the charge that Religion has put into their hands; like Souldiers, who being order'd to stand Sentinels at the City-gate for its Security, let in all sorts of people, Friends and Foes, Enemies as well as Allies, to its Destruction.

Be careful then, my Dear Brethren, how you proceed in this Affair for the satisfaction of your Consciences. Admit

not

Instructions for those that are to give their Voice for the reception of Novices.

C. I. p. 12.

not any out of favour or friendship, nor reject any out of prejudice or dislike. Proceed not likewise upon groundless Suspicions, Hear-says, or the Complaints of such Brothers as are of small Credit, mov'd many times by natural aversion, rash judgment, anger, envy, revenge &c. But let some substantial and solid Motive of your own knowledge ever accompany your Resolutions upon the matter. As for Example, If the Novice for whom you are to give your Voice, be Quarrelsome and notorious for sowing Discord among his Companions; If he be ill-natur'd, stubborn and of an inflexible will; If a Drunkard; If given to Cursing and Swearing; If out of weariness of his State of Life he often ask his Secular Clothes; If he receive Corrections, Penances, and other Mortifications with impatience, murmures and complaints; If he commit any of those Reserv'd Casts mention'd below in the VII. Chapter, or other more heinous Crimes, and the like. For the rest, make it your business before you go to Chapter, to beg in your prayers the assistance of the holy Spirit of God, to direct you for his greater Glory, and the discharge of your Duty, and say with the Wise-Man.

Sap. 9. 10.

O God, give me Wisdom that sits by thy Throne; O send her out of thy holy Heavens, and from the throne of thy Glory; that being present she may labour with me, that I may know what is pleasing to thee in the present Conjunction, to put it in Execution; for the honour of thy Name, my Neighbour's Salvation, and the good of Religion.

*Achior seeing the power that the God of Israel wrought, forsook the Rite of Gentilism, and believ'd God, and Circumcis'd his flesh, and was*

S.X. *And their year of Probation being ended.] The time appointed for their Trial fully compleat. Let them be receiv'd.]* Enroll'd in this Fraternity; by the Provincial as Ordinary, by the local Superiour as his Delegate; they having all the Conditions above requir'd; and having setl'd their Temporals, reconcil'd themselves to God by Confession, examin'd seriously the Obligations of their State, the Moti-

ves

ves of their Vocation, and represented to themselves in a devout and peaceable Retreat, the Worth, Excellency, and Merit of so glorious an action, as is the Consecration of one's self to God; by which we dye to this World to live eternally in the other, and offer both Body and Soul, the most acceptable Sacrifice to the Divinity which we have in our power to make. *To Obedience*] Under which, as the principal and most eminent of the three Essential Vows, the other two are understood; because Obedience really comprehends and includes both Poverty and Chastity; for, tho' most Religious make two particular distinct Vows of Chastity and Poverty, yet both these Obligations are contain'd in the Vow of Obedience, by which they are oblig'd in general to observe All that shall be Commanded them. This Truth is so evident, that the *Benedictine and Carthusian Monks*, make no other Vow but that of Obedience, Each of them only at their Profession, saying, *I promise Obedience according to the Rule*. And both of these Holy Orders declare, as well by their Constitutions as Practice, that Poverty and Chastity are sufficiently contain'd in the foresaid Words.

*Promising always to Observe.*] To the last Moment of their lives; [neither Superiority, nor Antiquity in religion, nor Infirmary, nor old Age, nor any other thing what ever exempting them from the Obligation of their vows, in as much, and as long as they are able, to their last Breath. *This Life and Rule.*] As it is Approv'd, and Confirm'd by Pope *Honorius III.* According to the pure Letter, without Gloss, Exemption, Privilege, or Dispensation: Vows as Vows, Precepts as Precepts, and Counsels as Counsels.

From this Text there arise four Obligations, binding us under Mortal Sin, in a matter proportionably weighty. 1. That the Novices be not admitted to their Profession, unless

*joyn'd to the people of Israel. Judith. 14. 6.*

Our Profession why express'd by the Name of Obedience.

The Obligations of this Text.



less sufficiently Prov'd, and found fit; and those that are such, cannot be Rejected. 2. That they be not admitted to their Profession, before their Year of Probation is quite expir'd, even to a Moment. 3. That their Year being finish'd, their Profession ought not to be delay'd or put off, without some very just Cause. 4. That he, who makes his Profession, do promise purely to observe this Life and Rule, without reserving any Condition, contrary to the Life and Rule of true *Frier-Minors*, and the Founder's Intention, and independent of all Corrupt Practices.

O my! sweet Saviour! Strengthen me in this Hour. Grant me the powerful assistance of thy special Grace, for the due performance of this great and goodly Promise I am now going to make to thy Honour. Behold, dear Lord, I do here give myself intirely to thee all the Days of my life: I consecrate my Understanding, Will, Memory, my Body and Soul, and All that I am or have, to thy Divine Majesty, from this Moment for Ever more, Vouchsafe to accept it from the most unworthy of thy Servants. But (O Gracious Jesus!) what great thing do I in offering my Self such an Holocaust to thy Service, since thou offer'dst another much greater of thine own Self for my Utility? Thou renounc'dst all things of this Life for my sake; Gratitude therefore will, that I renounce them all to serve thee. Take me then for ever (O my Sovereign) as Thine, since so liberally thou giv'it thy self to be Mine.

§. XI. *And in no Case.* ] Upon no account, colour or pretext whatsoever. *Shall it be lawful for them to go out of this Religion.* ] Without incurring the guilt of the damnable sin of Apostacy. *According to the Commandment of our Lord the Pope,* ] *Honorius III.* in his Bull which begins, *Cum secundum Consilium Sapientis*, given at *Viterbium*, in the fifth year of his Pontificat, so Ordaining. *For according*  
*Luc. 9. 62.* *to the Holy Gospel: No Man that sets his hand to the Plough, and looks back, is fit for the Kingdom*  
of

# §. XI.      *Their Profess'd Brethren.*      89

of God.] For verily all those who forsake God after this manner, who look back, and return again to the World after so solemn a Promise made to him, are wretched men, blotted out of Heaven to be written on Earth; who abandon their Souls as a prey to Devils, their Enterprizes to ill Successes, their Lives to unfortunate Ends, their Persons to the scorn and hatred of Men, and their Memories to infamy and the detestation of Ages.

The Prophet *Isaiab* has most divinely prophesied of such a fugitive Soul in his 14. Chapter, 23. Verse: *I will make her, says he, the inheritance, and possession of Hedge-hogs.* Verily the miserable Caitiff, after having thrown the Habit of Religion off her back, and the Yoke of Obedience from her neck, hatches in her entrails a thousand little Urchins, a thousand remorses, and stings of Conscience, which as they increase, make their pricks and darts multiply a thousand gnawings, a thousand apprehensions, as incapable of repose, as able to afflict a Heart. According to that of the Wise Man: *Whereas Wickedness is fearful, it gives testimony of God's damnation; for a troubled Conscience does always presume true things.* This faithless Soul is then like a wild Colt, scoured and chafed by Men, and Beasts; or like a Bull stung with a Gad-fly, who fain would run from himself, yet still finds himself with himself. God and her Conscience without intermission do inwardly torture, prick forward, and scourge her, and then all bloody and ulcerous, as she is, not able longer to remain within herself, but casting so many disturbances in her proper Mansion, she searches evasions and starting-places, expatiates in the pleasures and delights of the World, to dissolve her many Griefs; yet finds in every thing her gnawing Worm; representing to her, one while the Obligations of her Rule, another while the Judgments of God. She looks back upon the path of Vertue, which she

The lamentable State of Apostates.

Sept. 17. 10.

Oct. 1. 10.

Nov. 1. 10.  
Dec. 1. 10.  
Jan. 1. 11.

M

has

has forsaken, as an impossible Track, the Spirit of Iyes representing it to her all pay'd With Thorns and Briars. She reflects on the Rigor of the *Statutes*, revolving in her mind the Confusion she must undergo to be reconcil'd again to God and the Church. Not pleas'd With this, she re-enters into herself, and says in her Heart; That there is none but God, who afflicts her, and that necessarily she must free herself from him; for our Felicities are measur'd by the Ell of our Opinion, and no man is Miserable, but he, that apprehends his own Unhappiness. Then, soothing herself with these humane Discourses, she therein much labours to acquit herself from God, from the belief of Judgment, of Hell, and the Immortality of the Soul. Notwithstanding she cannot (being unable to put on a bold fore-head, and an Impudence strong enough to endure a stroke so dreadful) but contend against the Essence of God. Care finds her in her Bed, and is pinn'd to her Curtains; the thoughts of a Divinity, which she suppos'd to have totally banish'd from her heart in Pleasures, upon the least Affliction, the least Sicknes, the least appearance of Death, return, and make themselves felt with very piercing Points, which head-long throw her into Despair. The saying of the *Wise Man* is fulfill'd in her: *Revenge shall be taken on this Man in the streets of the City; and as an Horse-Cott he shall be chas'd; and where he expected not, he shall be apprehended. And he shall be in dishonour with all Men, for that he understood not the Fear of our Lord.* Judge, O Apostates, what a Life is this!

Eccli. 23. 30.

The Marks  
or fore-run-  
ners of Apostasy.

This unhappy Sin is not form'd all at once in the Soul of a Religious Man, but by degrees; and has several Marks which are fore-runners, to advertise Superiours, whereby they may prevent it in their Subjects, if they will take care to observe them. Among others these are some. A distaste of all

all Spiritual things; a perfunctory performance of religious Duties, neglect of Meditation, Spiritual Reading and Examen of conscience, making small account of the Sacrifice of the Altar, deriding the pious customs and practices of Religion, associating themselves with libertine and discontented Brethren, separating themselves from the Community, pampering their Bodies and love of Sensual pleasures, familiarity with Women, frequent receiving and sending out Letters by stealth, Disobedience, Contempt of Superiours, taking in ill part and stomaching Corrections, Propriety, Pride, Ambition, Infidelity, and the like.

Remedies  
against it.

Now against all these we must powerfully arm ourselves, if we desire to remain firm and constant in the discharge of our Vows, and not come to this extremity of Mischiefs. There is no better way to prevent it, than that wholesome and pious Practice, which is now in Use with most Religious, to wit, of Renewing our sacred Vows at certain times of the Year, with a lively Sorrow for all past failings against our Holy Rule, accompany'd with vigorous purposes of Amendment; reflecting seriously on the Obligations we contracted upon the Day of our Profession; calling to mind the Persons to whom we spake, and in whose Presence it was that we open'd our mouths, and our lips did distinguish and tie those indissoluble Knots. We vow'd and promis'd to the All-powerful and Living God, to observe the Rule of the *Frier Minors* all the Days of our life; to a God, I say, who will not suffer himself to be Derided, and to whom nothing is so Abominable as a faithless Promise: For, if it be a Crime not to stand to our word with Man, how much more Injurious is it to fail in our promise to God? Reflect hereupon what his Royal Prophet commands you in his Name: *Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God, all you who round about bring him Presents;*

*Ps. 75. 12.*

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to

to him that is Terrible, to him that cuts off the Spirit of  
 Princes, who is Terrible to the Kings of the Earth. We  
 likewise promis'd the same to his Blessed Mother the Virgin  
 Mary, to our Holy Founder S. Francis, to all the Saints  
 and Citizens of Heaven, to our Superiour, and by him to  
 the whole Order; and this in the presence of the most Holy  
 Eucharist at the foot of the Altar. All these, if we dare go  
 from our Word, will at the last Day appear in Judgment  
 to give testimony against us, and in quality of our Judges  
 assist at the just sentence of our Condemnation. Behold,  
 Dear Brethren, *The Stone, which shall be for a Witness to*  
*you, lest perhaps hereafter you shall deny, and give the*  
*Lye to the Lord your God.*

*Iosue. 24. 27.*

O my God! Assist me powerfully with thy holy Grace, that  
 so dreadful a Misfortune may never befall me, as to desert my  
 Institute. I do here prostrate before thy Divine Majesty, and  
 in the presence of the whole Celestial Court, renew, ratify and  
 confirm with all the powers of my Soul, the solemn Promise  
 which I made thee on the day of my Profession. And do pro-  
 test from the bottom of my Heart, that if at this present I had  
 a thousand Worlds more to dispose of, I would most willingly  
 leave them all for the Love of thee; and if I had a thousand  
 Hearts to sacrifice to thee, I would sacrifice them all with Joy,  
 Graciously accept, dear Lord, this my Offering: Pardon the ma-  
 nifold Transgressions, which I have hitherto committed against  
 this holy Rule; and strengthen me with thy Grace, that I may  
 persevere to the End in the exact Observance thereof.

whether it  
 be lawful for  
 a Frier-Minor  
 to leave his  
 Order to go  
 to any other.

Here may the Reader take notice, that no Frier-Minor,  
 unless dispens'd with, can without a manifest breach of his  
 Rule leave his Order, under pretext of going to another  
 more Strict and Perfect; there being no such in the Church  
 of God. For altho there may be found some that surpass  
 ours in the Accidental observations and practices of a Re-  
 ligious State, as are stricter Fasts, greater Silence, more  
 Solitude &c. Yet as to the Vows of Poverty, Chastity and  
 Obedience.

*Obedience*; wherein Religion essentially consists, none go before us; our *Seraphical Rule*, which was practis'd by *Christ* himself and his Apostles, being seated upon the very Top of Evangelical Perfection, as is obvious to any one that reads it. And therefore he, who after the profession of such a Rule, seeks after another Order, may very well be said to look back, and consequently not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. *S. Bonaventura* upon this Text is of the same opinion, where he says: *Si igitur non licet exire, quia non licet retrò aspicere &c.* If therefore it be not lawful to go out, because it is not lawful to look back; then all other Religion is backward in respect of this, and all those are Apostates from this Religion, who, after their Profession pass to any other whatsoever. Thus the *Seraphical Doctor*. From whence we must conclude, that if the Popes have sometimes granted leave to any of Ours, to pass from us to the *Carthusians*, such leave must be look'd upon as a Dispensation, and not as a point of Perfection.

S. XII. *And they that have already promis'd Obedience.*] That is, have vow'd to observe this Life and Rule. Here again our Profession is express'd by the name of *Obedience*, to give us to understand, that he who is truly Obedient, has fulfill'd the whole Law of Religion; has all that is requir'd of him by the Rule: Poverty, Chastity, Humility, Devotion, Simplicity, Mortification, Meekness, Patience, Modesty, and the rest. Which made a Servant of God to cry out in its Commendation, and say: O most Holy Obedience, how Acceptable art thou in the sight of God! Happy is the man that possesses thee, for he possesses all Perfection, nor can any thing happen Amis to him. Yea *S. Austin* assures us, that this Vertue is so admirable, and so necessary for Man's Salvation, that one of the reasons which mov'd the Son of God to take Humane Nature upon him, was to teach

The Excellency of Obedience, by which our Profession is signify'd.

*Franc. Papien.*  
*Chron. part.*  
*3. Lib. 3. Cap.*  
*44.*

*Ep. 8. super*  
*Gen. ad litt.*

teach us Obedience by his own Example. Man, says he, was disobedient even to death, that is, Death was the deserved punishment of his Disobedience; and the Son of God made himself Man, that he might be Obedient even to death.

Rom. 5. 19.

Adam's Disobedience shut Heavens gates upon us, Christ's Obedience set them open. For as by the Disobedience of one Man, many sinn'd; so by the Obedience of one, many were justify'd. Nor can there be a greater Argument of the Merit and Excellency of this Virtue, than the glorious Reward which God has given to the sacred Humanity of Jesus-Christ,

Philip. 2. 8.

Who was Obedient to death, even the death of the Cross; For which God has exalted him, and given him a Name above all other Names, the holy Name of Jesus, at which all the Powers of heaven, earth, and hell do bend their Knees.

Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let this solemn vow of Obedience, seal'd as with the Seal of the invocation of the most Holy Trinity, and the Blood of Jesus, never be forgotten by us. Let these precious Words, *They that have promis'd Obedience*, be ever sounding in our ears; and let us esteem nothing Meritorious, nothing Valuable, nothing conducing to Eternal Life in a Religious Man, that is not commanded and influenc'd by this excellent Virtue.

O blessed Jesus, who for the love of Obedience wert pleas'd to sacrifice thyself on the Altar of the Cross, give us grace to Live and Dye with thee in the Exercise of this heroick Virtue, that we may be partakers with thee in the Reward thereof.

Having Food, and where- with to be cover'd, With these we are content. 1. Tim. 6. 8. The beginning of Man's life,

Let them have one Tunic with a Capuce. ] Morally or artificially join'd together, so as to make one form of a Habit, tho' not really and physically fastn'd or sew'd to it. And this is esteem'd the Regular, and Necessary Garment of a Frier-Minor, (than which nothing can be more Simple, unless he go quite Naked) which he is bound always to wear

wear, with his Girdle and Buckets; and cannot leave it off for any considerable space, unless he has some very just and reasonable Excuse, without transgressing his Rule, and incurring thereby the guilt of a Mortal Sin. And another without a Capute, that will.] Which is left to their liberty and discretion, to put off or on, as the Seasons of the year, and other Circumstances may require. And these two Tunicks, one *interiour*, which retains the name of a Tunick with us, and the other *exteriour*, properly call'd a Habit, abundantly suffice to cover a wretched Body, a stinking Carcase, a sponge of Ordures, a nest of Vermin, a bnt for Worms, a receptacle of tumultuous and unruly Passions, an enemy of the Soul, and a scar of Sin; which to pamper and make much of, is to put a Sword into your Adversary's hand to destroy you. But, if to any one this Dress should not seem enough to defend him from the Cold, I would answer him, as our Holy Father did, when being ask'd: How he could with so slender Clothing be able to withstand the rigor of the Winter Season? He reply'd: "If we were inwardly inflam'd with the Heat of our Heavenly Country, we should easily endure this outward Cold.

O my Soul! Hadst thou continu'd within the limits of Original Justice, thou wouldst not have wish'd any Garment, but Imotency. O precious Attire! But Sin is come, which has by relaxation impress'd an ugly Scar, both on thee and thy Body; and needs wilt thou have Gold and Silk to wrap it in, Thou wilt sail over Seas and break the bounds of Elements, to seek out Dressings for it. Miserable that thou art! What is this but to seek for a Plaster to cover thy Wound; or an Ivy-leaf to stop thy Chancery? O my Immortal Spirit! let our principal Care extend henceforward to the decking and clothing of thee with Virtue and Grace, and all shall go well with our Stinking Flesh.

But here more effectually to induce my Reader to a neglect of his Body, I pray him to consider what S. Austin says;

*Warer, and Bread, and Garment, and House covering his Turpitude. Eccli. 29. 37.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3. Apotheg. 4.*

*Serm. 18. in Joan.*



Reasons to  
withdraw  
us from the  
superfluous  
Care of the  
Body.

In Ps. 118.

says; That the life of Beasts is different from that of Angels, and that of Men differs also from both. The life of Beasts is wholly terrene and earthly, and taken up only in satisfying their Appetites, that of Angels is heavenly, and only taken up with God. The life of Man is partly the one and partly the other, because Man partakes of both Natures. If he lives according to Spirit, he renders himself equal to the Angels, if according to Flesh, he becomes like to Beasts. This agrees with what *S. Ambrose* says, That he who lives according to the desires and appetites of his Body, is Flesh, and he who lives according to the Commandments of God, is all Spirit. So therefore he that lives according to the desires of the Flesh, do's not only lead no Spiritual life, nor the life of a Rational Man, but even the brutish life of Beasts. This, is what ought to excite all Religious Men to an intire neglect and contempt of their Bodies, and take them off from that busy care of Meat, Drink and Clothes: For what can there be more unworthy, and more misbecoming the nobility and generosity of Man, created according to the Image and likeness of God, and to enjoy him Eternally, than to make himself like to Beasts, rendering himself a slave to the motions of Sensuality, governing himself by the dictates of Flesh and Blood, and permitting himself to be carried away with the impetuosity of a Beastly Concupiscence? It is a very great Abuse, says *S. Bernard*, for the Mistress to serve, and the Servant to domineer. It is properly that Disorder, of which *Salomon* speaks, when he says, *That he saw Slaves ride on Horse-back, and Princes like Slaves walk on Foot*. Would you not think it a very strange thing, if a Beast should lead a Man bound after him, and should oblige him to follow wheresoever he should lead him? Yet notwithstanding, there are a great many People of all sorts, who let themselves be lead by Beastly Appetites, and  
the

Med. Cap. 5.

Eccles. 10. 7.

the great Number of 'em makes them to be less taken notice of, and is the Cause why so strange a thing as this is not wonder'd at, which is as much to be admir'd, as the thing itself. It is recounted of *Diogenes*, that walking with a Lantern and a lighted Candle in it at Mid-day, in the Market-place of *Athens*, as if he look'd for something he had lost, One ask'd him what he sought for? I seek a Man, says he; Do you not see a great many, reply'd the other, which the Market-place is full of? You are deceiv'd, says he, they are not Men, but Irrational Creatures; because they live not as Men but as Beasts, permitting themselves to be lead by their Beastly Appetites.

There is nothing so sovereign as early to accustom yourself to depend little on your Body, and quickly to forsake a thousand things by Election, which you shall be enforc'd to abandon of Necessity. When a manner of Vertuous Life is chosen, which has some Austerity in it; Custom makes it sweet, Grace fortifies it, Perseverance nourishes it, and Glory crowns it. How many Worldlings daily putrify in a miserable condition, who have from their tender Years yielded all submission to their Flesh; and how many delicate Bodies in our Convents have we seen, which the whole world condemn'd to the Bier from their entering into the Order, to go out of Hair-Cloth, Ashes and Fasts, as a *Phoenix* from her Tomb? All great Spirits, who have a feeling of their Extraction, of the beauty and nobility of their Souls, take not the Necessities of life, in Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, Cloathing, Lodging, but with shame and sorrow: They regard the Flesh as the Prison of a Spirit Immortal, and think to flatter it, is to strangle the better Part of themselves, which rests in the Understanding. I am born, says *Seneca*, for a more noble End, than to become a Slave to my Body. And the Philosopher *Plotinus*, who was renown'd

*Ep. 64.*

as the world's Oracle, could not endure to have his Picture taken, saying, He had trouble enough to suffer a wretched Body, without multiplying the Figures thereof by the help of Painting. And shall Religious Men place their glory and contentment in adoring, and affording it submissions which pass to the utmost period of Servitude ? *If you live according to the Flesh, you shall Dye*, said the Apostle to the *Romans*. How much the more we profit in the liberty of God's Children, so much the more we proceed in disengagement from Sense, and enter as into the Sanctuary of Souls, there to consult on Truths, and understand Reasons, which vindicate us from the dregs of the World, to give us passage into the Society of Angels.

O my Soul ! be mindful of the nobility of thy Extraction, and never degenerate into the nature of a Beast, by becoming a Slave to a rotten piece of Carrion. Reflect on the happy labours and austerities of a Vertuous Life, which are rewarded with an eternal Repose, an overflowing Satiety, a compleat Joy, a Glory everlasting : Cheer up thy self with the hope of these Rewards, and embrace with great fervency all sorts of Mortifications ; Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Nakedness, Fastings, Watchings, and all Kind of Hardships for the love of him, who suffer'd so much for the love of thee.

In what Cases  
may Frier-  
Minors have  
more than  
two Tunicks.

Nevertheless if *Necessity*, as Sicknes, old Age, violent Cold &c. require more than two Tunicks, Superiours may give leave ; to whom it belongs to provide their Brethren of Necessaries, *According to Times, Places, and Cold Regions*. The same likewise may be said of Change-habits and Capuces, when cleanliness and decency require it in Manual labours for Cooks, Brewers, Masons, &c. But if any one without Necessity has more than one Habit and Tunick, or makes use of Change-habits and Tunicks for Commodity's sake only, or out of Vanity, Curiosity or Sensuality, as for example, one by Night another, by Day, one at

at Home another Abroad, one on Working-days another on Holy-days, he do's without doubt transgress this Precept; yet if these Change-habits be kept in Common, to be us'd when Necessity allows it, it is no Sin. All other Garments whatsoever, as Shirts, Breeches, Stockings, Gloves, Capps &c. are forbidden us; for seeing our Holy Rule assigns for the Profess'd Brethren only two Tunicks, with a Capuce, Girdle and Brackets, it consequently excludes all other Attire, according to Pope *Clement*, who says in his *Declaration*: When any thing is generally forbidden any one, what is not expressly granted him, is suppos'd to be denied him. It is lawful notwithstanding for us to wear a Cloak at all times with our Habit and Tunick, as well for decency's sake, as to keep out cold, rain and other incommodities of the Weather. It is likewise permitted for those that travel, either to wear Hatts, or double Capuces; for these are not look'd upon as Clothes, but as common helps of Travellers.

*Clem. V. c. 3.*

I said: *If Necessity require more than two Tunicks*, Note. *Superiours may give leave*; which is much to be Noted. For if there be no real Necessity, the leave or grant of a Superior will signify nothing, as exceeding in such case his Commission in giving. And therefore the Brethren are here to be advertis'd, to have a special Care that in their petitioning for the Use of such things as are forbidden by the Rule, they do not alledge to their Prelates that for a Necessity, which before God, and in their own Conscience is only Sensuality; because such Licences, tho' suppos'd to be granted and obtain'd, cannot excuse the Person that makes use of them, from transgressing his Rule. And this generally holds in all surreptitious Dispensations, which work no effect, and in the Court of Conscience and before God are as if they were not. The reason hereof is manifest: Because no Superior has power to dispense in a Law superior to himself.

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Self, but upon the same conditions the Law allow's it. Now it is well Known, that the prime condition or foundation of all such Power is one of these two; either *Necessity*, or *Utility* of the Person that is to be dispens'd, without which the Legislator is presum'd not to be willing to remit the obligation of his Law; and therefore if these fail, the whole Dispensation falls to the ground, is void and of no force, and consequently cannot excuse the Person dispens'd with before God, from incurring the guilt of Sin, in using it; for example, in wearing Caps, Shooes, in riding on Horse-back, in not Fasting &c.

The form or fashion of our Habit what?

As for what relates to the *Form* of our Tunicks and Capuce, the Text making no mention thereof, nor Tradition deciding the Point, it is best to leave it to be determin'd by the Pope's Holiness, whose it is to clear all doubts of this Kind: So that That *Form* is to be accounted the right, which by him shall be decided such; whether it be the same with that us'd in our Holy Father's Time, or no. And therefore to dispute or call in Question the different *Forms* of Habits and Capuces, which *Observantines*, or *Capucines* use at this Day, is to little purpose, they both being Approv'd by the Church for their respective Congregations. The like is to be said of our Brackets, in which the farther you go from the secular form of Drawers, the more regular and religious it is esteem'd.

An Objection against our having two Tunicks answer'd.  
*Math.* 10. 10.

But if you ask here, How it comes to pass, that our Holy Founder in this his Apostolical Rule gives leave for a second Tunick, since in that deliver'd by our Saviour to his Apostles it is said: *Da not possess Gold, nor Silver, nor Money in your purses, nor a Scrip for the way, neither Shooes, nor two Coats?* S. Bonaventure upon this Text answers your difficulty. In the Gospel, says he, by the name of one Coat, is understood all Necessary Clothing, and not to have

two.

*two Coats*, is, not to have Superfluous Garments; such as Worldlings are accusom'd to Keep by them for Change, Curiosity and Vanity. Otherwise it is plain enough from the example and practice of our Saviour himself and of his Apostles, from whom the true Literal sense and meaning of the Gospel, as well as of our Rule is to be taken, that they had more than *one Coat*; as appears out of *S. Math. 21. Marc. 11. Jo. 13. Act. 12. 2. Tim. 4.* And according to this, *S. Francis* here in the Text divides one simple religious Dress into two parts; by *one Tunick with a Capuce* understanding all Necessary Clothing, by *another without a Capuce* all such Attire for the body, as Modesty, civil Decency, and the Condition of Man's nature requires, according to the different circumstances of Time, Place, Persons, Employments; banishing Superfluity and sensual Commodity, and attending only bare Necessity, of which the Apostles were not depriv'd.

S. XIII. *And they that are forc'd by Necessity may wear Shoes.* ] Otherwise it is forbid under Mortal Sin to wear them for a considerable space. By the name of *Shoes*, are understood all such things as cover the greatest part of the Foot, whether they be made of Cloth, Leather, or other such like; but not *Sandals*, which are necessary for preserving the Foot from being hurt, and therefore were permitted the Apostles *Marc. 6. v. 9.* So that with them, we are oblig'd to go bare-Foot, but not bare-Sole, no more than they.

This manner of going bare-Foot is much approv'd of by the Ancients, both Philosophers and Fathers. *Plato*, as *S. Bonaventure* witnesses, advis'd not to cover the two Extremities of the body, nor to accusom ourselves to treat our Head and Feet tenderly. For as these Parts have of themselves a certain soundness, so are they also better able to Bear.

*Carry neither Purse, nor Scrip, nor Shoes. Luc. 10. 4.*

Padag. l. 2.  
c. 11.

bear the cold than the other Members: *S. Hierom* likewise upon the 10. Chapter of *S. Mathew*, says, that the Custom of going bare-Foot is much to be commended. And *Clemens Alexandrinus*: It very well becomes a Man, says he, to go without Shooes; for to be shodd, is next door to be bound or shackl'd. It is an excellent Kind of exercise to walk bare-Foot, both for Health, and Easiness. But if we cannot go quite bare-Foot, let us make use of Soles or Sandals, which the *Atticks* call *καρίππας*, because they let the Foot go near the ground.

What Necessity  
suffices  
for our wearing  
Shooes.

A sufficient Necessity for wearing Shooes, is Sicknes or other Infirmitie, esteem'd such by a pious and judicious Physician well acquainted with the Obligations of our Rule; or by the Superiour, if the Physician be absent; or if neither be present, by the Sick person himself with the advice of his Confessor. Also vehement Cold: Also Necessary travelling through wet and dirty Countries; also when there is a Necessity of riding through such ways. It is likewise a sufficient Necessity to wear Slippers for a while, after a Journey to refresh the Body, or to say *Mass*. And generally, a sufficient Cause for wearing Shooes is, if for want of them we cannot conveniently perform any Office or Task injoy'd us, or that there be a just reason to fear the incurring thereby some Spiritual or Temporal dammage.

Moreover it is to be observ'd, that he who has leave to wear Shooes, must take care not to wear them any longer than Necessity requires; and that he proceed therein by Degrees, that is, if Heelings suffice, not to wear Leggings, if Leggings not to wear Socks, if Socks not to wear Slippers, if Slippers not to wear Shooes. So that *Necessity*, more or less, is the rule he must go by. And the same is of Shirts, Caps, and other things prohibited by the Rule, when they are to be Dispens'd with.

But

But my Dear Brethren, when we are in Health, let us for God's sake content ourselves to go Bare-foot, like-poor Beggars, abject and contemptible Persons, and such as make profession of a penitential mortify'd Life. The Nakedness of our Feet, when we behold them attentively, have a strange Kind of vertue to quell the pride and haughtiness of our Minds; and to go Bare-foot through thick and thin, in ice and snow, wonderfully allays the ardours of Concupiscence, and serves for a most excellent preservative against Sensuality. But if at any time in our Journeys it seem tiresome to us to pass through dirty and stony Ways, let us encourage ourselves to go on after the Example of so many holy Personages of the Order that have gone before us; after the Example of the holy Apostles, and of *Christ* himself. Let us likewise reflect upon our own Unworthiness and the manifold Sins of our lives past. What ought not he who has been Unfaithful to God, to suffer for the love of him, after he is return'd into his Favour? And he who has left God to follow his Passions, who has offended his Creator for a Transitory pleasure, and who has deserv'd thereupon Eternal punishment; to what torments, pains and incommodities ought he not heartily to submit, towards satisfying for the Sins which he has committed against the Majesty of God? *I went astray*, says *David* address'ing himself to God, *before I was humbl'd by Afflictions, but now have I kept thy Commandments*. It is that which makes me hold my peace, and not dare to complain, for what I suffer is nothing in comparison of what my Sins deserve. Thou hast not punish'd me, O Lord, according to my Deserts, and what ever we can suffer in this Life, is nothing in proportion to what one Sin deserves. Is it not just, that the Sinner who has despis'd God, should be despis'd and humbl'd; that there should be little esteem made of him, who has made

Motives to  
invite us to  
go bare-foot.

*Ps.* 118. 67.



made so little of his Master, and that the Man who has had the Insolence to offend his Creator by running out of the way of his Commendments, and made so many false Steps in following his own perverse Will, should be punish'd in not being able hereafter to take one Step but in Misery and Pain?

O my Soul! What comfort and refreshment will it be to thee, what joy in thy going Bare-foot, to think that thou hast Opportunity given thee of satisfying the divine Justice at so easy a Rate? To call to mind so many wearisome Steps, which those zealous Founders of Christianity made during the course of their Lives, travelling on Foot through the World to preach the Gospel to us, without *stick, crisp, money, and shoes*? To reflect on those painful and dolorous Steps, which the world's Saviour patiently endur'd in ascending mount *Calvary*, with a heavy Cross upon his shoulders, his forces being now quite exhausted? Wilt thou not take Part with thy suffering Lord, and account it for an Honour to accompany him thus Bare-foot, in Sack-cloth and Ashes?

*I took Hair-cloth for my Garment. Ps. 68. 12, They proclaim'd a Fast, and were cloth'd with Sack-Clothes from the Greater to the Lesser. Jon. 3. 5.*

*Math. 11. 8. Apol. ad Abb. Guiliel.*

§. XIV, *And let all the Brethren.*] As well Prelates as Subjects, in which there must be no Distinction. *Be clad in Course Garments.*] After the example of our Lord's Precursor; *who had his Raiment of Camels hair, and a leather Girdle about his loins. Math. 3. 4.* And of so many other great Saints meanly Attir'd. It would be a confusion to the Order, and a very unseemly thing for us, who make profession of such strict Poverty, Austerity and Penance, to wear Clothes that savour of Niceness, Curiosity and wordly Vanity. *They that are cloth'd in soft Garments, are in Kings Houses*, says the World's Saviour. And *S. Bernard* assures us, that a nice and effeminate Dress speaks an effeminate Soul. We should not be so intent, says this holy Father, upon trimming and decking the Body, if the Soul were not first neglected, and permitted to lie uncultivated

uncultivated and void of Vertue. Let us endeavour rather to secure for ourselves the garments of Glory in the other world, than be solicitous to provide for our Bodys any rich and sumptuous attire in this.

Then again, this Course Dress, besides the advantage it has to subdue and mortify the Body, and thereby suppress all wantonness and sensuality; it moreover serves to humble the Mind. For there is so great a relation between the Outward and Inward Man, and they have such a dependance upon one another, that as soon as the Body humbles itself, humble thoughts are stirr'd up in the Heart. The Submission, for example, which a man shews to another by Serving him, by Kissing his feet, by the course Habit which he wears, by the mean Office he performs, &c. have all, I know not what in them, which stirs up Humility in the Heart, or preserves and increases it when it is already there. It is that which *S. Dorotheus* answer'd, when this Question was ask'd him: How is it possible that the Mind should acquire Humility, by means of a Course Habit which the Body is cloth'd with? Is it not certain, says he, that the good or ill disposition of the Body, has an influence upon the Mind; and do we not see, that when the Body is Well, the Mind is otherwise dispos'd, than when it is Ill; and in a different disposition, when it is satisfied with Meat, than when kept low with Hunger? So when a man is mounted upon a well manag'd Horse, or rides in a Coach, his Mind is more elevated, than when he walks on Foot, or rides upon an Ass, or in a Cart; and when he has rich Clothes, he is otherwise dispos'd, than when he is poorly Clad. The same Observation is also made by *S. Basil*: For, says he, as rich Clothes raise proud and presumptuous thoughts in Worldly people; so a plain and course Habit inspires the Servants of God with such thoughts of Humility,

A poor Habit  
promotes  
Humility.

*Serm. 2.  
de Humil.*

*In Reg. fustis  
disp. 22.*

and Contempt of themselves, as if it made them really despicable. And as Worldly people, adds the same Saint, love to set themselves off with rich Clothes, to be thereby distinguish'd from others, esteem'd and honour'd; so the Servants of God, and the truly Humble are pleas'd with plain and coarse Clothing, thereby to render themselves the more despicable in the eyes of Men, and to preserve and fortify true Humility in their Hearts.

*Vita Cap. 5.*

S. Francis and other Servants of God treat their Bodies roughly, mortify and persecute them as their greatest Enemy.

Our Holy Founder, answerable to what he here prescribes, made upon all occasions so very small account of his Flesh, having his chiefest care, thoughts and affections setl'd intirely upon his nobler part, the Spirit; that he was wont with much contempt, and hardship to treat his Body; commonly calling it by the name of Brother-Ais, that dull and vile *Animal*, which we apply to all kind of drudgeries and servile works, and push forward with continual whips and scourges; nourish with the grossest meats, and harness out with a halter about his neck, and some ugly old Pack-saddle, or other base habiliment upon his back. It is after this manner, says he, that Frier-Minors are to be treated.

But it is not our Holy Founder alone that has us'd his Body after this kind of severe way, the other Holy Fathers likewise do declare open War against it, and look upon it as the greatest Enemy they have in the world; because in effect it is from this, that all Temptations, and all our Imperfections have their beginning, according to that of the Apostle S. James: *From whence proceed these wars and strifes that are in us? Is it not from our Passions, that make war in our Flesh? For the Flesh, as S. Paul says, has its desires, contrary to those of the Spirit, and the Spirit has also such as are contrary to those of the Flesh.* Behold here from whence proceeds that continual Warfare we have within ourselves: Sensuality, Concupiscence, and Self-love,

*Jac. 4. 1.*

*Gal. 5. 17.*

Love, are the causes of all our domestick wars, of all sins, of all faults, and even of all the imperfections we commit; and consequently the greatest obstacle and hinderance we meet with in the way of Perfection. And hence it is that the Servants of God conceive a holy hatred and horreur of themselves; for looking upon themselves as Enemies to their Creator, the more they come to know his Goodness, and to love him, the greater Aversion they have for themselves, according to the words of Job, *Thou hast set me as a Mark against thee, so that I am become a Burden to myself.* Job. 7. 20. They see that they have in them the Root of all sorts of Evils, this corrupt inclination of the Flesh, from whence proceed all their Sins, and the Knowledge of this makes them rise up and revolt against themselves. Wherefore is it not just also to abhor him who has made you quit so great a good as God himself, for a pleasure of so short a continuance? Him who has made you deserve Hell, and put you in hazard to lose Everlasting Glory? Him insin, who has been the cause of so much Evil to you, and will be so continually. For which cause the Ancient *Anchorites* apply'd themselves with a great deal of zeal to the Mortification of their Flesh; thinking it so necessary to weaken their Bodies, that when they had no other means to do it, they had recourse to great Labours, which they impos'd upon themselves, to extenuate and abate their Forces.

*Palladius* recounts, that a holy *Anchorite*, finding himself extremely tormented with proud and vain Thoughts, which he was not able to drive away, resolv'd to take a Basket upon his back, and continually to carry Earth in it from one place to another: And when they ask'd him what he did, I vex him, says he, that vexes me, and revenge my self upon my Enemy. The same thing is recounted of *S. Marcarins*. And it is reported of *S. Dorotheus*, who

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exercis'd

Serm. 90.  
de Div.

exercis'd great Penances and Austerities, that being one day ask'd why he so grievously tormented his Body? It is, says he, because it torments me. *S. Bernard* likewise incens'd with a holy Choler against his Body, as against his greatest Enemy, breaks forth into these words. Let God arise, says he, and let this arm'd Giant fall at his feet, yea let him fall, and let this Enemy of God be crush'd in pieces, this Self-lover, this Friend of the World, this Slave of the Devil, what do you think? Certainly you will cry out with me, He is worthy of Death, let him be Hang'd, let him be Crucify'd. It is with such a Courage, and with such Arms as these, that we ought to fight, and subject our Bodies, for fear they rebel, and in their revolt, force the Mind and Reason to take party with them, and both joyn together and side with our sworn Enemy the Devil. For it is by the help of the Flesh principally, whose rebellion he foment, that the Devil makes war against us; we must therefore wage war against him also, by mortifying and macerating our Flesh with Watchings, Fasts, Labours, Hair-Clothes, Disciplines &c. thereby to prevent its revolting against us. *S. Austin* writing upon these words of the Apostle: *I fight, but not with blows in the Air, but I chastize my Body, and bring it under Subjection*, takes notice, that this is the true Means to triumph over the Devil; Treat your Body ill, says he, and you will overcome the Devil, for this is the way, the Apostle assures us, we must fight against him. When a Captain, in Garrison upon the frontiers of the *Moors*, hears an Alarum given, if he has a Slave that is a *Moor*, he presently puts him in chains into a Dungeon, for fear he should rebel against him, and take party with his Enemies. We must use our Body after the same manner, we must mortifie it, we must clap it into Chains, for fear lest at our Enemy's approach, it joyns itself and sides with him against us.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

O what a Secret it is to hate our Body, that we may love it; to hate it for a Time, that we may love it for all Eternity; to punish it in this Life, to give it thereby a perpetual rest in that to Come; to despise it, that we may honour it; to handle it roughly, that it may be perfectly establish'd in all delights? This is the way which all Just Men have pass'd, to arrive at the chiefest point of their Rest. They have resembl'd the grain of Wheat, which must rot, that it may bud out and flourish in the Ear. They have abided the diversity of Times, and endur'd the Syth and Flail: They have been ground in a Mill, and pass'd by Water and Fire, before they could be made Bread pleasing to *Jesus-Christ*. Our Losses are our Advantages; we lose nothing, but to gain by it; we humble ourselves, to be Exalted; we despoil ourselves, to be better Cloth'd; and we mortifie ourselves, to be Reviv'd.

O sweet *Jesus*! I do most heartily renounce in imitation of thee and of thy holy Saints, all curiosity, luxury, vanity and pomp of the World, all soft and delicate Clothing, and this Carnal Life, which would always busy itself about my Body. I am come Naked out of my Mother's Womb, and I shall return Naked into my Grave; what care I for my Body, so all go well with my Soul. Thy Nakedness therefore, dear Lord, shall be my clothing, thy Dishonour my livery, thy Grace my ornament, thy Poverty my riches, thy Sufferings my delights, thy Confusion my glory, thy Cross my bed, and thy Death my life.

Now Observe, that this Meanness of our Habit is to be regulated, partly by the *Colour*, partly by the *Courseness* of the cloth, and partly by the *Price*. In all which, if we notably fail by going against the receiv'd custom and practice of the Order, we may commit a Mortal Sin, as transgressing this *Equipollent* of our Rule. And first as to the *Colour*, it must be Ash, or drawing near to it; so to put us

wherein consists the poverty of a Friar's Habit.

in

*Ecdi. 10. 9.  
Gen. 3. 19.*

in mind of doing Penance, of Humbling ourselves, and of Dying ; imaginig with ourselves , that our Habits continually Night and Day ( for we never put them off , as we said , when we go to Bed ) speak these or the like words to us. *Earth and Ashes what art thou proud of? O Man, remember , that Dust thou art , and to Dust thou shalt return.* It is by this, that Nature gives thee beginning , and by the same , Death shall put an end to all thy worldly Vanities. There is no better way to humble and abase the proudest of all Creatures, than to represent to him his Beginning and his End. The Middle part of our life, like a kind of *Proteus*, takes upon it several Shapes not understood by others , but the First and Last part of it deceive no man ; for they do both begin and end in Dust. So that we may conclude , that Man must either be stupid by Nature , or most wicked by his own Election , who will not correct and amend himself, having continually before his eyes, Ashes for his Glass, and Death for his Mistress. As for the *Courseness* of our Habit , it must be judg'd of in order to the Feeling : Not such as may cause Horrour in the Beholders ; but which may excite them to Devotion and Penance , and may truly mortify the Body of him that wears it , as becomes the Penitential State we make profession of. And lastly as to the *Price* of the cloth , according to the Pope's Declaration, it is to be determin'd ( within the bounds of our strict Poverty ) by the Superiours of the Order , to-wit , Provincials, Custodes and Guardians, with regard to the Custom of countries and Diversity of regions, to whose judgment and conscience it is left.

*In Apparel do  
not glory at any  
time. Ecdi. 11.  
4.*

§. XV. *And they may mend them.* ] Out of respect to holy Poverty, to preserve them the longer ; after the manner of Poor people of the world, who having but few Clothes , use all possible means to make 'em last , by patching and

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and piecing them. *With Sack-Cloth and other pieces.* ] According to that of holy Job 16. v. 16. *I have sow'd Sack-Cloth upon my skin, and cover'd my Flesh with dust.* Thereby to express our Penitential State of life; signify'd by Sack-Cloth; as well as the Contempt of the world, fitly represented by mending them with Patches; for with worldlings to wear Patch'd Clothes, is dishonourable and reproachful. *With the blessing of God.* ] That is, the Blessing of God be upon those, who using this liberty of the Rule, do make themselves Contemptible in the sight of Men, that they may be glorify'd before God; whom they seek to please by embellishing their Soul with the ornaments of Vertue, as becomes Religious Men, rather than by decking the Body with vain attire.

*We are Fools for Christ's sake. 1. Cor. 4. 10.*

*The Simplicity of the Just Man is scorn'd. Job. 12. 4.*

O Good, and Gracious Jesus! Who wert pleas'd at the time of thy Passion for the love of us to be cloth'd out of Derision in an old ragged Purple garment, to make an honourable amends to the Eternal Father for the shame and confusion which we deserv'd by our committing-Sins: I humbly beseech thee, give me leave to partake with thee in this Contemptible Dress. My Soul earnestly desires it, being a thousand times better satisfy'd with a poor patcht Sack-cloth garment for thy sake, however Contemptible in the eyes of Men, than with the rich and stately Robes of the most flourishing Monarch in the World,

It is necessary nevertheless, that the Brethren in piecing their Habits, conform themselves to the Ordinances of their Superiours, and the *Statutes* of their respective Provinces; striving no less to preserve a religious Decency and Uniformity therein, than a zealous Humility and Self-contempt. By which means, they will more easily avoid falling into Vanity, Singularity, and Hypocrisy; which otherwise are apt to slip into our religious Patching, if good heed be not taken; and so rob us of that benediction and reward, which

we



*Not his Children in Filthiness. Deut. 32. 5.*

Cleanliness and decency recommended to us.

*Then, Why dost thou despise thy Brother? Rom. 14. 10. He that despises his Neighbour, Sins. Prov. 14. 21.*

To what do's the coarseness of Apparel and Diet avail

we expect for it at the hand of God, for whose sake we do it, in imitation of our Saviour's Poverty, Derision and Contempt. And altho Poor garments are appointed us by our Rule, and we confin'd by it to one Habit and a Tunick without Change; yet this hinders not; but that we may, and ought to keep ourselves clean and neat; for there is nothing so ill becomes Religious Men, as Nastiness. And it is no less displeasing to our Holy Founder, as being an evident Mark of the foulness of the Soul, and of an idle sluggish Temper, that takes delight, like a Swine to wallow in the Mire. Besides, it offends our Brethren with whom we converse; turns the stomachs of Seculars, disgraces Religion, and carry's disrespect and irreverence with it to the Altar. It is true, Curiosity and over much Niceness in Beggars rags is ridiculous and absurd, but Nastiness much more.

§. XVI. *Whom I admonish and exhort, not to despise those People they see cloth'd in soft and colour'd Garments, and feed on delicate Meats and Drinks.* } To the end we may not value ourselves too much upon our Penitential State, and become Proud thereupon, and so be apt to slight and despise our Neighbours as less Perfect than ourselves, a Temptation to which our Austere course of life seems somewhat to expose us: Hence it is that our Holy Founder to prevent the same, concludes this Chapter with the present Admonition, exhorting us not to despise those we see better Clad and Fed than ourselves. For which purpose it is here good, as a sovereign Remedy against it, to consider that this great parsimony in our Habit and Diet injoynd us by our Rule, is not so much for penurious saving, nor valuable precisely for any thing it has in itself; but only as it prepares and disposes us towards subduing our Passions, mortifying Sensuality, making satisfaction for our Sins, and helping us to exercise with greater facility those noble and heroick Vertues

tues of Humility, Modesty, Meekness, Temperance, Chastity, and the rest prescrib'd in our Rule. And moreover that being freed thereby from the care and solicitude of the Body, we may be more intent upon the functions of the Mind, and have more time for Prayer and Meditation, and other spiritual Duties, the better to prepare us for Eternity. Otherwise Poor Friars have nothing to brag of above Rich people, much less to despise them; and the corporal Austerities of their Rule will little avail them, if they take not this course, nor propose to themselves this end. A Course Dress, says *S. Hierom*, is very proper to express the Contempt of the world; but upon condition, that our Mind at the same time do not swell with Pride, nor our Habit and Speech give the world the lie. Wherefore *Let not him that eats not, judge him that eats. For God has taken him to him*, says *S. Paul*. *17bo Rom. 14. 3.* *art thou that judgest another man's Servant? To his own Lord he stands or falls. And he shall stand: For God is able to make him stand.* Who alone knows the heart and intention both of the Rich and the Poor; and both one and the other by God's grace may be sav'd in their respective Callings; those with their choice Dishes and gorgeous Attire, and these with their homely Dress and coarse Fare.

But it is not here only our Holy Founder's intention, that we should forbear to despise our Neighbour on the account of his Diet and Apparel, but likewise upon all his other Weaknesses and Infirmities. This is, what the Modesty and Humility of our Order requires of us; for he that is truly Humble, never despises his Neighbour, what ever Sins he sees him fall into, nor do's he thereupon esteem himself the more; but on the contrary, he takes occasion the more to humble himself; because he considers that he is fram'd of the same Mass that he is, who is fallen; and because in his Brother's fall he beholds his own. For as *S. Austin* says *Soliloq. c. 17.*

Ep. 4.

Other Considerations to hinder us from despising our Neighbour.

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very well, our Brother commits no Sin, which we should not also commit ourselves, if God by his Mercy did not continually hold us up by the hand. And therefore an ancient Father of the Desert, when he heard of any bodies fall, us'd to weep bitterly, and say, Such a one is fallen to Day, as much may happen to me to Morrow; since I am a Man like him, subject to all humane weakneses; and if I am not yet fallen, it is a particular Grace of God which has supported me. For as when we look upon a Blind, Deaf, or Lame man, or any one afflicted with any other Distemper, we ought to reflect upon all these Calamities in others, as so many Obligations which we have to God, for having exempted us from them: So ought we in like manner to consider the Sins of all men, as so many gracious Favours of God to us; since we might have fallen into the same, if by his infinite Mercy he had not preserv'd us. Thus it is, that the Servants of God look upon humane frailties, and keep themselves humble, without despising their Neighbour by reason of his Sins, how ever grievous they may be. Mindful of the Wise Man's counsel, that says: *Despise not a man that turns himself from sin, nor upbraid him therewith: Remember, that we are all in state to be blam'd.* They consider themselves, for fear of being tempted with the same things, for which they should despise others; and lest God by a Punishment, which usually falls upon this sort of Pride, should permit them to find to their cost, how great Humane weakness is. Wherefore let us always remember, tho' we are of a *Seraphical Order*, that we are not yet of the number of *Seraphins*, but that we still remain to be Men, such as our Neighbours are, subject to many failings.

Eccli. 3. 6.

*Whom I admonish and exhort, not to judge those People they see clob'd in soft and colour'd Garments, and feed on delicate Meats and Drinks. ]* According to that of S. Paul. *Then,*

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*Thou, why judgest thou thy Brother ? For we shall all stand before the Judgment - Seat of Christ. For it is written, Live I, says our Lord, that every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. Therefore every one of us for himself shall render account to God. Let us therefore no more judge one another. Let rich Seculars, and Great Persons of the world eat, drink, rise, go to bed, and sleep at their ease, sport, play, divert, and clothe themselves after their own fashion, what is that to us ? Let us meddle with our own Concern, and not give our Judgment where it is not requir'd. Let us stick close to our Profession, be contented for God's sake with poor patch'd Garments, with poor and ordinary Fare, and all other things that are in use with Poor People, as our sublime Poverty requires, without judging or condemning the Rich; who amidst their great plenty are many times more temperate, than those we take to be Poor, more humble, more mortify'd, less slaves to their Passions, and more acceptable before God. This was the Judgment of a holy Man, and a true Disciple of S. Francis, who, when he saw any one curiously deck'd, and cloth'd in gold and silver Laze, was accusom'd to say : Perhaps under that rich Dress there lies hid some Hair-shirt, or Iron-girdle to mortifie the Flesh in private; and so shun Vain-glory much more advantageously, than others in their patch'd and ragged Habits. It is the mark of a noble and generous Soul, to be Indulgent to others and Severe to himself. It shews, that a man is disingag'd from Selfdown, and over great care of his little Individuum. This is a Lesson, which we Frier-Minors above all people in the world should learn; by which means our Poverty will be more commendable and edifying, and our Example have greater force to excite men to Penance." Let us not then judge nor despise (says our Holy Founder elsewhere) such as lead their lives in*

Rom. 14. 10.

*Bern. à Quinsavalle apud Marian. Lib. 2. Cap. 29.*

*Opusc. Tom. 13. Collat. 2.*

„ pleasures and delights, and are curiously trick'd up and  
 „ adorn'd with gaudy and superfluous Apparel. God is both  
 „ our and their Lord, and is able to call them to him;  
 „ and not only to call, but likewise to justifie them. Where-  
 „ fore let us reverence and honour them, as our Brethren  
 „ and our Masters. For they are truly our Brethren, as being  
 „ created by one and the same omnipotent Hand with us;  
 „ and they are also our Lords and Masters, in as much as  
 „ they further and assist us in doing Penance, by giving us  
 „ Alms, and furnishing us with all necessaries for our Body.

wherein con-  
 sists the ma-  
 lice of Rash  
 Judgment,  
 and the  
 wrong it do's  
 to our  
 Neighbour.

But for our farther Instruction in this matter, and to  
 make us cenceive a greater horrout against Rash Judgment,  
 let us here observe the hainousness of this Vice; which con-  
 sists in this, that it causes us to injure the Reputation of  
 our Neighbour within our own heares, upon light conjec-  
 tures, making him to lose the Esteem he before had with  
 us, and which he has right to have with all the world,  
 untill his Actions give sufficient proof of the contrary; so  
 that upon very slight grounds we come to despise him with-  
 in ourselves, whereby without doubt we do an injury to  
 our Brother. But the Fault we commit is greater or lesser  
 according to the Matter upon which we frame our Judg-  
 ment, and as the Grounds upon which we frame it are more  
 or less apparent and solid. The better to make you compre-  
 hend how great this Fault is, by another like to it: Consi-  
 der how great a Sin it would be, if you should lessen your  
 Neighbour's esteem in the opinion of another Person, and  
 that by staining his Reputation, you should ruine the esteem  
 and good opinion he before had of him. You cause no less  
 damage to him, when without reason or sufficient ground  
 you happen to receive a bad Impression yourself concerning  
 him; for he desires as much to keep his credit and reputation  
 with You, as with any one else. Each one may easily judge  
 by

by Himself, the prejudice he do's hereby to his Brother: Would not you be offended, should another harbour a bad opinion of you, without having given any occasion on your side for so doing? You offend him after the same manner, judging disadvantageously of him, without any just occasion offer'd. Measure another by yourself, and let Charity and Justice make use of no other means than these, to measure your charity towards your Neighbour.

But if it be Criminal to judge ill of our Neighbour, even when there is some Appearance of evil; how far worse must we believe it is, when the things are good in themselves? And yet we refrain not to make an ill Interpretation of them, and judge they are perform'd with an ill Intention, or out of humane Respects. This is properly to usurp God's right, and inroach upon his divine Jurisdiction, to pretend to penetrate the secrets of Hearts, and to judge the most hidden thoughts and intentions. *This is to become Judges, full of unjust thoughts. This is like those who divine, and by vain conjectures would know what they are ignorant of.* And therefore S. Paul says very well; *Who are you, that take upon you to judge the Servant of another? It belongs only to his Master to absolve or condemn him. Wherefore take care of judging before the time, untill our Lord comes himself, who will illuminate even the thickest darkness, and discover the greatest secrets of hearts, and then every one shall receive praise from him.*

S. XVII. *But rather than every one judge, and despise himself.] Erecting within his own conscience a Tribunal of justice, call himself to Judgment, examine his thoughts, words, and actions; see if they agree with the Rule and Life of Frier-Minors, what progress he has made in Vertue since his entry into Religion, if he has well husbanded his Time, walk'd worthy of his Calling, corresponded with*  
divine

Jac. 2.  
Prov. 23.

Rom. 14.

1. Cor. 4.

*If we did judge ourselves, we should not be judg'd. 1. Cor. 11. 31. I will become more vile and despicable than I have been, and will*

be humble in  
mine own eyes.  
2. Reg. 6. 22.

divine Grace, master'd his Passions &c. And in all these particulars accusing himself of Negligence, Tepidity, and Ingratitude towards God, let him pronounce Sentence against himself, execute it with rigor; and undervalue, contemn and despise himself for it; and the more, by how much he finds himself Criminal, and to have fail'd in his Duty. And in conclusion let him say with all humility, as the devout Southwell: *Quod fui, Domine, ignosce; Quod sum, corrige; Quod ero, dirige*: O Lord, forgive what I have been, correct what I am, direct what I shall be.

John. 8. 6.

Behold the Practice of all good Religious Men, who, conscious of their manifold Imperfections and Weaknesses, love better to examine their own, than to censure the Life of another. Those, who were ready to lift up their hands to stone the Adulterous Woman, were diverted, and departed with confusion, seeing their sins written by our Saviour in the Dust, with certain figures to express them. If we could always behold our own Life before our eyes, as a piece of Tapistry, we should there see so many Serpents amongst flowers, that we would have more horreur of our own sins, than will to censure those who are like ourselves.

O Sovereign Judge, never suffer me to usurp that right of Judicature which thou hast reserv'd to thy self, nor to despise my Neighbour for what I see Amis in him; make me rather judge mine own life, than censure the lives of others. Must I be full of eyes without, and blind within? Shew me my stains, and give me water to wash them out. Alas! I am altogether but one Stain, and thou art all Purity. My Soul is asham'd to see itself so dark before thy light, and so smutted over before thine immortal Whiteness. Blot out my sins, dear Lord, tear from me my disordinate Affections, which are but too deeply rooted in my Heart; and pardon by thine infinite Mercy, what thou mayst condemn by Justice.

Of

Of the Divine Office ; and of Fasting ;  
and How the Brethren ought to Travel.

C H A P. III.

*Let the Clerks make the Divine Office according to the Order of the holy Roman Church, except the Psalter, when they can have Breviaries. And let the Lay-Brothers say 24. Pater-Nosters for Mattins ; for Lauds 5 ; for Prime, Tierce, Sext, and None, for each of these Hours, 7 ; for Evening-Song 12 ; for Compline 7 : And let them pray for the Dead. And they shall fast from the feast of All-Saints to the Nativity of our Lord. But for the holy Lent, which begins from the Epiphany of our Lord, continuing out 40 Days, which our Lord consecrated by his own holy Fast, they that will fast it, be they bless'd of our Lord; and they that will not, let them not be oblig'd: But let them fast that Other to the Resurrection of our Lord. At other Times let them not be oblig'd to fast, except Friday. And in time of manifest Necessity, the Brethren shall not be bound to Corporal Fast. Moreover I counsel, admonish, and exhort my Brethren in our Lord JESUS-CHRIST, that when they travel through the World, they do not strive or contend with Words, nor judge others; but be Meek, Peaceable, and Modest, Mild, and Humble, speaking handsomly to every body as it becomes. And they ought not to ride on Horse-back, unless forc'd by a manifest*

Math. 4. 23



Luc. 10. 8.

ifest Necessity, or Infirmary. Into what ever House they shall enter, first let them say: Peace be to this House. And according to the holy Gospel, it shall be lawful for them to eat of all Meats that are set before them.

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## THE EXPOSITION.

Our Lord has given me a Tongue; and with the same I will praise him. Eccli. 31. 30.

- S. I. **L** Et the Clarks. ] Whether they be in holy Orders, or not. Make the Divine Office. ] Say the Canonical Hours. According to the Order of the holy Roman Church. ] According to the Calender, and the Rubricks prescribed

crib'd in the *Roman* Breviary. *Except the Psalter.* ] Which translated by the *Septuagint*, or according to others, some very ancient *Gallican* Version, is peculiar to the *Roman* Patriarchal See and the Cardinals, and is not us'd out of *Rome*. So that the Brethren are to follow, and conform themselves to the Psalter of the Vulgar Edition in their Office, which is that us'd by the Universal Church. *When they can have Breviaries* ] The use whereof is therefore allow'd to every one in particular, wherein to say their Office; and the want of the same is a sufficient excuse for not reciting it.

*Seven times a Day I have sung praises to thee. Ps. 118. 164.*

By this Precept, our Holy Founder do's not intend to oblige us in particular to say the Divine Office in the Quire, though by Custom we are oblig'd in common; or to sing it with the *Gregorian* Note; or with Musick. Neither do's he intend to oblige us more, or to more, than Secular Sub-Deacons, for example, are by receiving that Order. In such sort, that the Obligation of *Roman* Clarks and *Franciscan* Clarks is the very same, as their Office and Rubricks are the same; save only the particular Rubricks and Offices of the Saints of the Order, by special Privilege granted by the Apostolical See. And as for the *Roman* Missal, we are oblig'd to it only for Conformity's sake, in as much as it follows and agrees with the *Roman* Breviary, and no otherwise. But what our Holy Father chiefly requires, and recommends „ to the Clarks, is; „ That they say the Divine Office with „ Devotion as in the presence of God, and with a true sin- „ cere Heart seek to please him, rather than to tickle the „ Ears of the people with their Notes; minding not so much „ the melody of the Voice, as the harmony of the Soul; „ and that their Tongue keep tune and agree with their „ Heart, and their Heart with God. Behold a *Frier-Mi-* „ nor's best Comfort!

What are we oblig'd to by this Precept.

*Opusc. Tom. 1. Ep. II.*

Now the Reason which mov'd our Holy Founder to injoin

The reason of imposing it.

His Brethren the *Roman Office*, rather than any other, was the great Desire he had in all things to follow, as exactly as possibly he might, the footsteps of this most Holy Sea; knowing it to be founded by *Christ's* beloved Vicar *S. Peter*, to be particularly assisted by the Holy Ghost, and to be govern'd by so many wise, religious and holy Popes, from the first planting of Christianity in the world to this very Day; who having the care and direction of the whole Universal Church upon their hands, yet never fail'd night and day with this long Office to praise the most High. And it is commanded us under Mortal Sin, every day to be perform'd; to the end, that as we live altogether upon Alms, so we might have some Obligation annex'd to our State of life, by means whereof we might acknowledge in our best thoughts our Benefactors continual Favours; and by the performance of this divine Task, have opportunity Night and Day to present our petitions to the Throne of God in behalf of the *Living* and the *Dead*, by whose Charities we are maintain'd.

Great care  
and diligence  
to be us'd  
in the perform-  
ance of this  
divine Task.

§. II. For the rest, to understand well their Obligation, our Clerks must consult Divines, who treat of the Canonical Hours; they must apply themselves seriously to the study of their Rubricks, examine diligently which oblige under Sin, and which not; take care that the *Roman Breviary* and *Missal*, like two Sisters, walk hand in hand, and be made to agree as much as may be; shewing themselves zealous observers of all the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Roman Church* to a tittle, even in things that are not of strict obligation. And lastly, whether they say their Office in the Quire, or to themselves in private; whether they read it, or sing it, they must at all times carefully bear in mind the saying of the Prophet: *Cursed be he that do's the work of God Negligently*. The infinite Greatness and Majesty of the divine Being, compar'd to Man's indigency, misery, wretchedness  
and

Jerem. 48.10.

and nothing, requiring that the Homage we yield to so awful a Sovereign be in all regards the most punctual and exact, the most absolute, the most perfect, and most complete that may be imagin'd on our sides. So much the greater Care and Reverence, says *S. Bonaventure*, is due to the Divine Office, by how much the more immediately it is exhibited to God himself. A diligent and exact performance thereof, is a certain sign of the uprightness and integrity of a Religious Community; as on the contrary, the neglect and disrespectful hurrying it over is a huge deformity, and the mark of a great corruption of Manners. Let no one esteem himself God's Servant, that neglects and sets light by his chiefest Service, which is the Divine Office. Thus the *Seraphical Doctor*. *Plutarch* speaking of the Reverence with which Priests in his time approach'd their God's, says, that whilst the Priest offer'd Sacrifice, there was one appointed to cry out continually with a loud Voice, *Do what you De*; as if he would have said, think of nothing else but what you are doing, distract not yourself, but wholly apply your mind to your present business. And for the same purpose, they had another excellent Saying much in use among them, *Let those sit that adore*. Let those that adore God in Prayer, and thereby entertain themselves with him, do it with Repose, Attention and Reverence, and not run about from place to place, as if they had something else in Hand. For, as our Holy Father says: "If the Body, which is to be the food of worms, require rest when it takes its Refection; with how much greater quietness, tranquillity and peace of Mind, ought the Soul to receive the food of Life, which is God, and which by holy Prayer, and by a due performance of the Divine Office is familiarly exhibited to us?"

Alas! How dare we behave ourselves with so little Respect and Reverence at our Prayers, as some are seen to do,

Qij

even

*Spec. Dist.*  
*Cap. 16.*

*Plat. in Numa.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Orac. 16.*

even in Churches, and at Altars? Is not all in this Universe, on us, about us, and above us, markt with the Messages of the fear of God? Above us, God reigns in the store-house of Air and Clouds; the pillars of the Firmament tremble, the Heavens are bow'd in all their regions under the glory of his Steps. The Winds are the couriers and postilions of his Will, who run along spreading his Name throughout the four Quarters of the habitable World. The Sun confesses, he is but a Shadow in comparison of the increated Light, and presents as many fingers as there are Rays, to write down the Commandments of God upon the brows of Clouds: His Decrees move with wings of Lightnings, and are heard in the roaring voice of Thunders. It is so Natural to bear a Reverence to his Divine Majesty, that there is not a Creature in the world, how insensible soever, which feels not the touches of this much-to-be-ador'd Greatness. Wild Beasts, who roam up and down forrests, with blood and massacres perpetually under their paws, by natural Instinct quake at the thundering voice of God. Fishes in the bottom of seas and abysses, with horroure hear it: Enraged Tempests, which seem ready to tear the World in pieces, become silent at the command of the Highest, and draw in their wings under his Throne: Waves and Floods, which make a shew not to regard this great *All*, no more than a single Element, dissolve their fury upon the sight of one silly grain of Sand, which imposes a Law on them by virtue of God's ordinance. The very Devils, all on fire in the flames of their punishments, which infinite Misery seems to have exempted from fear, cannot free themselves from this Sting.

O most Mighty! O most Sovereign Lord of things visible and invisible! O Great Eye, who seest all, and art not seen by any here below! Thou art worthy, if we with mortal lips may.

may call thee worthy; yea worthy, to whom all intelligent and reasonable Nature should give continual thanks for thy inexplicable Benefits; Worthy, before whom we on our bended knees should all our life-time remain prostrate; Worthy, that for thee we should have praises and prayers everlastingly on our lips. And where is that brazen Brow which dares to offend thee in the midst of thy Temple of this Universe, from whence thou on all sides beholdest us?

Accursed then be that Man a thousand times, that fails in his Duty to his Creator, that carelessly, negligently, perfunctoriously performs this divine Task, reciting it without devotion and attention. Who approaches to it without due preparation, who assists at it without decency, modesty, and gravity: Who minces it, omits it: Who intermixes with it foreign affairs, wanton gestures, prophane discourses: Who withdraws himself from Quire-duties without cause: Who makes an *Accessory* of the *Principal*, letting every little Trifle take place of it. Who presumes to approach to the Altar of the living God, more out of custom than devotion, carrying with him precipitation, want of compunction, impurity of intention, disorderly affections; and many times *anger, pride, hatred, envy, revenge &c.* Infine accursed be he, who having care of the Tabernacle committed to his charge, permits all to lay in disorder, the Church and Sacristy full of dust and cobwebs, the Altar-linnen all torn and foul, the Body of our Lord to be consecrated upon old nasty Corporals, unworthily administred, undecently repos'd &c. All which draw upon our criminal heads so many maledictions, desolations, plagues, wars, famines, heresies, untimely deaths. For believe me, Brethren, there is no Sin which the divine Justice more severely chastises, than the want of Reverence towards Holy things; as carrying along with it, a plain Contempt of God. Many other sins are written in Sand, and blown away with a smal breath of God's

Job 19. 24.

Important  
considera-  
tions to exci-  
te us to a due  
Reverence  
towards the  
Divinity.

God's mercy; but the faults of Impiety are carv'd upon the corner of the Altar *with a graver of Steel, or with a Diamond point*, as the Prophet speaks. I will here deliver a most excellent Means to preserve my Reader from committing Irreverences towards this Divine Majesty. It is, a strong and lively apprehension of the Perfections of the increated Essence, oppos'd against the Frailty and Nullity of ours; that penetrated with the Greatness of the Omnipotent, we may be drench'd in the abyss of our Nothing; and so learn at our Prayers to keep an infinite Distance betwixt us and our Creator.

*Our Lord is Terrible, and exceeding Great, and his Might is marvellous. Glorifying our Lord as much as ever you can, he shall yet surpass, and his Magnificence is marvellous. Blessing our Lord, exalt him as much as you are able; for he is greater than all Praise. Exalting him be ye replenish'd with strength. Labour not, for you shall not comprehend him. Who shall*

To this purpose, the devout Soul, first conceives God, Great, Dreadful, Majestick; she conceives him as a Sea, infinite in essence, goodness, beatitude; comprehending within himself all Being, all Good, all Truth, and not only comprehending, but anticipating it to all eternity with an incomparable Eminence. She beholds the whole Universe in the Imensity of God, like a *Sponge* in the midst of the Ocean, an *Atome* in the Air, and a little *Diamond* set in the highest Heaven. She acknowledges God to be the Foundation of all things possible, the super-essential Being of all things that are, and that are not, without whom nothing can subsist neither actually nor potentially, and that he has no hold which the Understanding may take to have knowledge of him. She represents God to herself as the Beginning and End of all things, the Creator, the Founder, the Basis, the Support, the Place, the Continuation, the Bound, the Order, the Tye, the Concord, the Consummation of all creatures; who has within himself all the good of Angels, of Men, and of Universal Nature; who has all Glory, all Dignities, all Riches, all Treasures, all Comforts, all Delights, all Joys, and all Beatitudes. Who grasps the vast extent of Seas in his fist; who weighs Heaven with all its Globes

Globes in the hollow palm of his Hand ; who supports the heavy mass of the Earth with three fingers of his power ; who poizes Mountains in his ballance : Before whom the World with all the huge diversity of its Nations, is no more than a drop of Dew , or the cock of a Ballance in the hand of a Gold-Smith ; before whom all Monarchies are but Dust , and Men but silly Grass-hoppers. Were all Mountains like to *Libanus* on fire, and turn'd into victims for his Sacrifices, it would be nothing in respect of his Majesty.

Then this devout Soul walks leisurely into those fourteen depths of Greatness, which are in God, that is, *Infinity, Immenstiy, Immutability, Eternity, Omnipotency, Wisdom, Perfection, Holiness, Bounty, Dominion, Providence, Mercy, Justice*, and the *End* to which all things tend. All which she considers, first absolutely, then by comparison and application, making return upon herself, and comparing this *Infinity* of God with her *Nothing*, this *Immenstiy* with her *Smalness*, this *Immutability* with her *Inconstancy*, this *Eternity* with the *Shortness* of her temporal life, this *Omnipotency* with her *Weakness*, this *Wisdom* with her *Ignorance*, this *Perfection* with her *Defects*, this *Holiness* with her *Vice*, this *Bounty* with her *Ingratitude*, this *Dominion* with her *Poverty*, this *Providence* with her *Stupidity*, this *Mercy* with her *Obduracy*, this *Justice* with her *Iniquity*, this *End* to which all things tend, with the necessary *Dependances* which arise from her *Infirmities*.

Here she is ravish'd in God, as a little Pismire in the Sun ; and like *Aristotle*, who, as it is said, being not able to comperhend the ebb and flow of an arm of the Sea, threw himself into it : So she drowns her in such a multitude of Wonders, not willing any longer to measure her Love by the ell of her Knowledge. She is transported in this great Labyrinth of miracles, otherwise than the Queen of

*Sheba*

see him, and shall declare him? And who shall magnify him as he is from the beginning? We shall say many things, and shall fail in words; but the Sum of our words is, He is in All. Glorifying him how far shall we be able? For the Omnipotent himself is above all his works. Many things hid are greater than these; for we have seen few of his works. But our Lord made all things, and to them that live Piously he has given Wisdom. Eccli. 43. 29.



*Sheba* at the sight of the Palace of *Salomon*; and cannot at last but break forth into acts of Love, Admiration, Joy, Hope, Fear, Praise, Honour, Reverence, Adoration &c, both by outward expressions of the Mouth, and gestures of the Body, testifying the resentments of her Heart, and say, sometimes with *S. Francis*, O my God, who am I, and who art Thou? Sometimes with the Royal Prophet, O God, *what is Man, that thou art mindful of him? My God, and my all, the God of my heart, my portion, and my inheritance to all eternity!* Sometimes again with *S. Austin*, O Beauty ever ancient, O Beauty ever new, too late have I begun to love thee, too late to serve thee, O Beauty ever ancient, O Beauty ever new!

Behold here the Considerations, which are the source of all Piety and Devotion in the world, and which have caus'd the Saints, even to melt into Respect at their Prayers; and shall they not have some influence upon us, to contain us within the limits of Duty, whilst we assist at Divine Service? Certainly that man must be prodigiously Stupid beyond expression, or else arriv'd to the utmost degree of Malice and Impudency, who is not mov'd therewith; knowing assuredly that when he sets himself to Prayer, he speaks to, and places himself in a particular manner in the presence of this most Adorable Majesty. For if before an earthly Prince, we take care to keep ourselves always in a profound Respect, and compose our Words and Actions in the most respectful manner possible; and should think it a gross Incivility, to turn our back, sit upon our breech, lean upon a form, whilst we are speaking to him, or to amuze and busy ourselves with any thing else; how is it possible we should not be so much Masters of ourselves as to carry ourselves with the like Respect, when we reflect attentively, that we are in the presence of so great a God; who do's not only  
take

take notice of our Exteriour behaviour, but penetrates even to the bottom of our Heart ? And who is there, that is fully possess'd of this truth, that dares withdraw his eyes or heart, even for one moment, from what he is about; or as I may say, turn his Back upon God, amusing himself not only with vain, but even sinful thoughts ? If I were in any Master's service, says *S. Austin*, and instead of waiting upon him, as I ought to do, I should busy my self in something else, he would have reason to cudgel me, as I truly deserv'd. Or if I should come to make my complaint to a Judge, of some injury done me, and should quit him upon a sudden, turning my back upon him, to treat with some other Person; would not the Judge have reason to believe me very extravagant, and cause me to be kickt out of his presence ? Yet see how far greater Irreverence they daily fall into, who putting themselves in Prayer to God, permit their thoughts to be carry'd away with all sorts of Distractions imaginable.

*in Ps. 85.*

Wherefore to remedy so unreasonable, absurd, and intolerable Abuse, besides what I have said, I here likewise propose to my Reader these Practical Considerations. And in the first place, the Advice which *S. Bernard* gives, and which he himself practis'd. When you go to the Church, says he, lay your hand upon your mouth, and say, Stay here at the door ye bad thoughts, ye criminal desires, ye irregular affections, and carnal concupiscences; but you my Soul enter into the joy of your Master, and of your God, that you may know the will of your Lord, and visit his holy Temple. *S. John Chrysostom* says, that when we go to Prayer,

Practical Remedies against Distractions at our Prayers.

*in Ps. 4.*

R to

1. Cor. 4. 9.

Grad. 4.

Isai. 38. 14.

Callat. 2.

De prof. Relig.  
Lib. 8. Cap. 58.

to the words of *S. Paul*, *We are become a spectacle to the World, to Angels, and to Men*. Other Saints, in the beginning of the Divine Office, as that holy Man of whom *S. John Climachus* makes mention, are wont to recollect and gather together all their thoughts, and all the powers of their Soul, and speak to them in this manner: Come, let us adore our Lord who made us, let us prostrate ourselves and weep before him; because he is our Master and our Lord; because we are the People of his Pasture, and Sheep of his own making. Others are accusom'd for the same end, to make their Prayer, when they can, before the Blessed Sacrament; or at least turn themselves towards the nearest place where it is kept, and to fix and unite their heart and thoughts to it. Others help themselves by looking upon Pictures or Images, whereby they find themselves excited to affection and respect. Others by lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, find that this helps them to elevate and fix their Minds. It is also a very good Remedy against Distractions, to represent our Weakness to God, by lively and short Ejaculations, imploring his assistance, and saying with the Prophet, *Lord I suffer violence, answer for me*. In fine, not to be distracted in time of Prayer, we must endeavour to be recollected all Day long, and keep a strict guard over our Senses; for God loves to converse with Souls, that are like a Garden Inclos'd. It was a Maxim, says *Cassian*, amongst the ancient Fathers of the Desert. That such as we would be in Prayer, such ought our Disposition to be when we are out of it, to prepare ourselves for it; because the situation and motion of the Mind in Prayer, depends upon the precedent Disposition it was in before, and upon that Impression it had before receiv'd. Such as the Liquor is, says *S. Bonaventure*, that we pour into a Vessel, such will be the Sent that it will give; and such as the Seed is that you have receiv'd into your Heart, such will be

be the Fruit that it will bring forth. For it is most certain, that the *Species* of those different Objects, which made an Impression upon our minds at other times, will not fail afterwards to disquiet us, by presenting themselves also in time of Prayer. Wherefore if we apply ourselves to Spiritual Exercises, and to works of Piety, we shall have holy and pious thoughts at our Prayers; but if all the Day long, we employ ourselves, and set our Hearts upon vain and extravagant things, the thoughts we shall have will be of the same nature: For there is nothing more common or natural, than to make a frequent Reflection upon what we love. If therefore you would have your Mind at repose in time of Prayer, and not be distracted by vain thoughts, you must before hand cast off all those Ties you have to Earthly things, and must fill your Heart with nothing else but the love of Heavenly; and the greater progress you make in this, the greater your application and attention will be to Prayer, which thereby will also become more easy and familiar. Behold in short the principal Methods, which may conduce to awake and stir up our attention to Prayer, and cause us to remain in it with that due Respect, as is necessary to obtain any thing of our Great God, upon whom depends all our Happiness.

O my Soul! Serve thy self then of all this to excite thee to Devotion, and to draw acts of Adoration, Praise and Thanks-giving from thy affectionate Heart and Mouth, towards so Great, so Glorious, so Gracious, so Bountiful a Lord God. And prostrating thy self on the earth, present him with all the thoughts of thy Understanding, all the affections of thy Will, all the acts of thy Memory, all the motions of thy Appetite, all the *ideas* of thy Imagination, all the desires of thy Heart, all the functions of thy Senses, all the faculties of thy Spirit. Let all thy bones, marrow and bowels with an interior feeling of Gratitude and Admiration, cry out and say: Lord! Who is like to thee, in *greatness, goodness, graciousness, love, bounty, liberality, mercy, power, wisdom, justice*! O that every minute of my Life, I might praise thee; bless thee, give thanks to thee for thy great Glory, and thy Benefits.

Holy,

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Thou hast made Heaven and Earth, with all the Ornaments thereof. Thou hast compass'd the Sea with bounds by thy almighty Word. Thou hast shut up the Deep, and seal'd it by thy terrible and glorious Name. Thou makest the pillars of Heaven to tremble under thy feet. Thou strikest terrour into all Creatures, by the insupportable brightness of thy Majesty. Thou art in the Temple of thy holy Glory: Thou beholdest the Depths, and sittest upon the Cherubins. I adore thee, my God, from the center of my Nothing, with all the Creatures of the Universe; making an intire Resignation of all that I am into thy hands; and desiring now, and to all Eternity, to depend on thy blessed will.

Thus shall you  
Pray: Our Fa-  
ther. Math.  
6. 9.

The Obliga-  
tion of Lay-  
Brothers in  
this point.

§. III. *And let the Lay-Brothers say 24 Pater-Nosters for Mattins; for Lauds 5; for Prime, the Third, Sixth, and Ninth Hours, for each of these 7; for Even-Song 12; for Compline 7.* } By virtue of this Precept, the Lay-Brothers are not bound to say as many *Ave-Marias* as *Pater-Nosters*: But Custom, and Devotion of the Order to our Blessed Lady, have introduc'd an Obligation. They must also know, that they ought to say their Hours, as near as they can, about the same time the Clerks say theirs. Yet as the Clerks can upon some reasonable motive say their Matins and Lauds over night, and the whole Office of the day in the morning; so may they, if they fore-see they shall be employ'd the whole day in some Manual labour, whereby they cannot say it with due devotion at the times appointed. But as to the Manner of saying it, whether kneeling, standing, or sitting; what Place is most convenient; what are the most proper Means for hindering or recalling distracted thoughts; how to avoid Tedioufness, which so frequent Repetition of the same Prayer, tho' never so excellent and divine, is apt to cause in our minds; and how for Distrac-  
tions

tions, for Omissions therein are culpable, a prudent and pious Confessor will best direct them, with proportion to the Clarks Office.

Moreover, as I before advertis'd the Clarks, so I do here in like manner the Lay-Brothers, to have a special care how they behave themselves in the presence of God; not to run over their Office in haste, perfunctoriously performing it, without Attention, Reverence, and Devotion; but let it be, as truly it is, the principal Concern of the whole Day, to which all other things ought to give place. Yea, I am bold to say, that the whole Conduct of their lives depends upon it, which is well or ill regulated, according to their well or ill acquitting themselves in the duty of Prayer. He who knows how to pray as he should, knows also how to live as he should, says *S. Austin*. Prayer is the Channel, through which Almighty God communicates his favours, assists us in our necessities, and enriches us with his treasures. Some Saints say, it is like a Chain of Gold, fastn'd to heaven, and hanging down to the earth, whereby the Graces of God descend to us, and we are rais'd and elevated to him. We may also say, that it is *Jacob's Ladder*, that reaches from earth to heaven, by which the Angels continually ascend and descend, to carry our Petitions to God, and bring back his Blessings to us. *S. Austin* calls it the Key of heaven, and in effect it is a Key that unlocks all its Gates, and by which all the Coffers of the celestial Treasures are open'd. He says also, that as natural Food nourishes the Body, so the word of God and Prayer maintain and nourish the Soul. Infine, I know not, says Pope *Celestin*, speaking of the importance of Prayer, how to say any thing better of it, than what *Zozimus* my Predecessour said: When is it that we stand not in need of the divine Assistance? Wherefore in all sorts of occasions and affairs, let us always

The great need we have of Prayer requires it be exactly perform'd.

*Hom. 4. Ex 50.*

*Serm. 226.*

*Contra Pelag. Cap. 9.*

always have recourse to his Protection; for it would be an insupportable pride, should man presume to do, or to think he can do any thing of himself. Without Prayer, our Spiritual Life cannot subsist; for it is that which gives us strength to perform all the obligations of our Profession, and to profit as we should do, even by the most troublesome accidents. It is that which makes us easily digest all injuries and hardships, and causes them to become easy and supportable; so that there is nothing can happen to a Soul, of which it will not make its profit and advantage. In a word, if we make good use of Prayer, we shall therein find a Remedy for all our faults, and an assured help and means to maintain ourselves in the purity and vigour of Religion. But without that, says *S. Bonaventure*, all Religion is dry, imperfect, and near its ruine. Tepidity presently comes upon us, the Soul by little and little grows weak, and insensibly loses the fervour and courage it before had for Spiritual and Heavenly things; its good desires and holy resolutions are dissipated and vanish away, and bad inclinations succeed in their place. In fine, we come at last to please ourselves in nothing but vain and unprofitable things, and to be transported with joy for such as are even ridiculous. And what is still worse, vain-glory, anger, envy, ambition, sensual delights, and those other dangerous inclinations, which we thought we had extinguish'd, begin to revive anew in our Hearts, when we grow cold in our Devotions; and bring disorder and corruption along with them, to the scandal of the world, and the ruine of Religion. This being so, I cannot do our Lay-Brothers a more acceptable piece of Service, than to shew them the Manner how they ought to pray; as the most effectual Means to draw down the benedictions of Heaven upon themselves and others; To which purpose behold here a short Method.

*De Prog. Relig. c. 7.*

§. IV. V. *Their Lay-Brothers Office.*

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§. IV. Let it be their business always before they begin, having chosen a convenient Place, first of all to implore the divine Assistance, and to prepare their Hearts, placing them in his presence : Then to form their Intentions according to the exigency of their own, their Neighbours, or Benefactors necessities : To propose to themselves some divine Mystery, drawn from the life and passion of our Saviour, or of his blessed Mother the Virgin, at the beginning of each Hour, or at least one for the whole Office of each Day, to entertain themselves with during the time of Prayer : To offer it up in honour of the Saint, whose feast we celebrate : To reflect seriously during the course of their Prayer, to Whom they speak, and What they ask; for if they be not attentive to what they are doing, and that their Heart pray not, their Tongue will labour in vain. At the end, when they have done their best, to beg pardon for all negligences, irreverences, and omissions therein, and to chastize their Neglects by some voluntary Satisfaction.

*Before Prayer  
prepare thy  
Soul; and be  
not as one that  
tempts God.  
Eccli. 18. 23.*

*A short Me-  
thod of Vo-  
cal Prayer.*

*With Heart  
and Mouth  
praise ye, and  
bless the Name  
of our Lord.  
Eccli. 39. 41.*

O blessed Sovereign, and Lord of uncircumscrib'd Greatness and Glory, by whom I was created to praise, honour, and adore you; give me grace to offer you this Sacrifice of praise with a fervent and sincere devotion, that it may ascend like sweet Incense to your Divine Majesty. Bridle the interiour powers of my Soul, and my giddy and roving Imaginations; that during this time of Prayer I may be intirely recollected, by a fix'd and intent consideration of your holy Presence; so effectually to obtain what I petition for of your divine Bounty.

This Method, and a serious Reflection upon the following *Paraphrases*, which I have here inserted for that end, will greatly help them in the right performance of this important Duty. We will speak first of the *Pater-Noster*, or Lords Prayer.

§. V. This divine Prayer is greatly recommendable for three excellent Qualities it has beyond all others. For its *Authority*,

*The excel-  
lency of the  
Pater-Noster.*



*thority*, being made by our Saviour : For its *Brevity*, by which means it is quickly learn'd, easily retain'd, and soon said. And lastly, for its *Fulness*, as containing all that a man can desire, hope, or ask, either for Body or Soul, for this Life or the other. Our Holy Father found so much in it, wherewith to entertain himself, that as *S. Bernardin* relates of him, he walk'd ten *Italian* Miles, saying only one *Pater-Noster*. Which those Lay-Brothers would do well to take notice of, that are so quick at their Prayers, and so slow at their Work ; and may assure themselves, that one *Pater-Noster* devoutly recited, is of more value in the sight of God, than a thousand disrespectfully hurried over. Now follows the *Paraphrase* upon it.

A short Para-  
phrase upon  
it.

§. VI. *Our Father.* ] Most High and Mighty, great God of Hosts, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; most Wise, most Holy, most Just, most Bountiful ; our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier and Comforter. *Who art in Heaven.* ] Who, tho thou fillest the whole Universe with thy presence, by means of thy Immenſity, yet art most especially in Heaven by Glory, which thou there impartest to thine Elect. *Hallow'd be thy Name.* ] Thy great and dreadful Name, may it be known, worthily prais'd, serv'd, and honour'd by all Creatures throughout the whole Universe. *Thy Kingdom come.* ] May we by thy gracious favour, after the miseries and afflictions of this Life are ended, partake of the ineffable blessings and joys of thy Celestial Glory ; joys, which neither Eye has seen, nor Ear heard, neither has it enter'd into the Heart of man to conceive, which thou hast prepar'd for those that love and serve thee. *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.* ] May we here below, love, honour, fear thee, and obey thy Commands in all things, with the same readiness, cheerfulness and exactness, as the Saints and Angels do in Heaven. *Give us this Day*  
our

*our daily Bread.*] Afford us both spiritual and corporal Nourishment; all necessary food and sustenance for Soul and Body give to thy helpless and needy Suppliants, who are not able to subsist one single Moment, either in Grace or Nature, without thy continual bounty and benign influence. *And forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.*] Pardon the Sins of our lives past, and all the Punishments due to them; as we desire to pardon sincerely from our hearts, and to love and do Good to all such as have done us Wrong. *And lead us not into Temptation.*] Permit us not, who are weak, frail, and silly creatures, unable of ourselves to withstand the Assaults of our enemies, the Flesh, the World; and the Devil, to fall into their snares, and be tempted by them above our Strength. *But deliver us from Evil.*] Past, Present, and to Come, both of Sin, and of all other Miseries. *Amen.*] So be it, may all this be accomplished, may it thou graciously please to grant these our Petitions.

S. VII. Next to the Majesty of the most Blessed Trinity, incomparably rais'd above all Creatures, to whom we address'd ourselves in the *Pater-Noster*, the Catholick Church teaches us to reverence and pray to the most holy Mother of God, who has been as a burning Mirrour, in the which all the beams of the Divinity are united. *Origen*, calls her the Treasure of the Trinity's *Methodius*, the living Altar: *S. Ignatius*, a celestial Prodigy: *S. Cyril*, the foundress of the Church: *S. Fulgentius*, the Repairer of mankind: *Proclus of Cyzike*, the Paradise of the second Adam, and Shop of the great Union of two Natures: *S. Bernard*, the Firmament above all Firmaments.

The praises  
of our Lady.

And our Holy Father, in his Prayers to the *Virgin Mary*, gives her wonderful Commendations. "All hail (says he) O most holy Queen, *Mary* Mother of God, who art

*Opusc. Tom. 2.*  
*Salutatio ad*  
*Virg. Mariæ.*

*Oratio ad  
Virg. M.*

*Legend. c. 9.*

*Serm. 9. de  
Concep. p. 1.*

„ a perpetual Virgin, chosen by the Heavenly Father, who  
„ consecrated thee, with his most blessed and beloved Son,  
„ and with the Holy Ghost the Paraclete; in whom is, and  
„ was all Plenitude of grace and all good. God save thee,  
„ his Palace. God save thee, his Tabernacle. God save thee,  
„ his Mother. And again: " O Holy Virgin *Mary*, there  
„ is not one like to thee born of all the Women in the world,  
„ Daughter, and Hand-Maid of the most high King the  
„ celestial Father, most pure Mother of our Lord *Jesus-*  
„ *Christ*, Spouse of the Holy Ghost. Thus our Holy Father  
in his accustomed devotions to this *Queen of Heaven*;  
towards whom, as *S. Bonaventure* witnesses, he bare an  
unspeakable Affection and Reverence. And *Bernard of Busto*  
assures us, that he warn'd his Brethren to attribute to her  
all the Privileges that could possibly agree with her Excel-  
lency, and to yield her all the Praises whereof a pure Crea-  
ture is capable.

All that may be said, redounds to the glory of the Work-  
man who made her, and advanc'd her with so many pre-  
eminencies, yea that alone affords us a singular confidence  
in her Protection. The Devotion towards this common Ad-  
vocate of mankind is so sweet, so sensible, so full of con-  
solation, that a man must have no Soul not to relish it.  
Wherefore with intention to promote it, according to my  
small ability, I have here undertaken briefly to explain the  
several parts of the *Ave-Maria* or Angelical Salutation;  
a Prayer as singular, as familiar to the whole world, con-  
secrated by the Church in honour of her; thereby to help  
our Lay-Brothers in the recital of their Office, and to nour-  
ish and entertain their Devotions towards this most excel-  
lent Lady, the special Patroness of our *Seraphical Order*,  
under the title of the *Immaculate Conception*.

*Opusc. Append.  
Sentent. 13,*

14, 15.

„ The *Ave-Maria* (says our Holy Father) when I pro-  
nounce

„ nounce it, the Heavens smile, the Angels are glad, the  
 „ Earth leaps for joy, Hell trembles, the Devils fly away.  
 „ As Wax melts before the fire, and as Dust is scatter'd be-  
 „ fore the face of the wind; so at the invocation of the  
 „ Name of *Mary*, the whole Army of malign Spirits are  
 „ dispers'd. In perils, in anguishes, in doubts call upon  
 „ *Mary*, think upon *Mary*; let her not go from thy  
 „ Heart, let her not depart from thy Mouth; and that thou  
 „ may'st obtain her Intercession, forsake not the example of  
 „ her Conversation.

Where, in the first place by way of *Preludium* or en-  
 trance into the Matter, we are to observe that this divine  
 Prayer, by which we express our joy for the *Incarnation* of  
 the Son of God, consists of three Parts. Whereof the first,  
*Hail Mary, full of Grace, our Lord is with thee, was*  
 made by the Holy Ghost, and deliver'd by the Angel *Gabriel*.  
 The second, *Blessed art thou amongst Women, and blessed is*  
 the fruit of thy womb, *Jesus*, was also inspir'd by the Holy  
 Ghost, and spoken by *S. Elizabeth*. The third, *Holy*  
*Mary, Mother of God, pray for us Sinners, now, and at*  
*the hour of our Death*, was added by the Catholick Church,  
 as a Profession that *Christ* is true God, and the Virgin  
*Mary* the true Mother of God, against certain Hereticks  
 that denied both. And we make it immediately to follow the  
*Pater-Noster*; desiring therein the Blessed Virgin's Interces-  
 sion, that so by her joining in Prayer with us, we may  
 more easily obtain what we ask for in our *Lords-Prayer*.  
 Let us then with these or the like Affections, address our-  
 selves most humbly to her, and salute her with the Angel,  
 saying.

*Hail Mary.* ] God save you, the Sea's bright Star; great  
 Queen of Heaven and Earth, we beg leave to congratulate  
 you for that unspeakable Gladness, which fill'd and over-  
 flow'd

A Paraphrase  
 upon the *Ave-*  
*Maria*.

*Luc. 1. 28.*

*Ibid. 42.*

Luc. i. 38.

flow'd your blessed Soul, when the Angel brought you the first news of the adorable Mystery of our Saviour's *Incarnation*. And we render you most humble thanks for that perfect Resignation of yourself to the will of God, when with profound humility you answer'd; *Behold the Hand-Maid of our Lord, let it be done to me according to thy word. Full of Grace.*] Most pure, undefil'd, untouch'd both in your Conception, and Nativity, and in the whole Course of your Life; all fair, immaculate, spotless throughout, and replenish'd with a Purity so perfect and intire, that nothing under God can be imagin'd more absolute and compleat. Source of the fountain of Grace; Mirrour of humility and obedience; Mirrour of patience and resignation; Mirrour of modesty, silence and retirement; Mirrour of wisdom, devotion, and sanctity; Mirrour of faith, hope, and charity; Mirrour infine of all vertues, graces, favours and prerogatives, whereof a pure Creature is capable. *Our Lord is with thee.*] Thou do'st inclose, O most blessed Lady of Angels, within the small compass of thy sacred Womb, the Lord of the whole Universe, that Great-Little one, the incomprehensible *Jesus*, who replenishes with his Immensity both Heaven and Earth, and supports them with three fingers of his Power.

Judith 13. 23.

*Blessed art thou amongst Women.*] *Blessed art thou, Daughter of our Lord the High God, above all Women upon the earth; Blessed above the Children of men; Blessed thro' all Generations; Blessed in every Tabernacle of Jacob, because in every Nation which shall hear thy Name, the God of Israel shall be magnified in thee: Blessed be our Lord, which made Heaven and Earth, which has directed thee to the wounds of the head of the Prince of our Enemies; because this Day he has so magnified thy Name, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouths of Men, which shall be mindful of the power of our Lord for ever. And blessed*

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*blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.* ] *Jesus*, the Son of the living God : *Jesus*, the express Image of his Father's glory : *Jesus*, the bright Ray of eternal light : *Jesus*, the increated Wisdom by whom all things are made : *Jesus*, the Redeemer of mankind, and Oracle of divine mysteries : *Jesus*, the Harp of the celestial Father : *Jesus*, the eternal Bishop of souls ; *Jesus*, the Restorer of ages, and Desir'd of all nations : *Jesus* most powerful ; *Jesus* most glorious ; *Jesus* most humble and meek ; *Jesus* most patient and obedient ; *Jesus* most chaste and holy ; *Jesus*, author of our Faith, and finisher of our Hope ; *Jesus*, supreme object of our Love, and over-flowing satiety of all our Desires ; *Jesus*, our God blessed for ever.

*Holy Mary.* ] Daughter of the eternal Father, Mother of the eternal Son, Spouse of the eternal Spirit, and Tabernacle of the most glorious Trinity. *Mother of God.* ] Mother of the *Messias*, Mother of the Prince of peace, Mother of the king of heaven ; whom for the space of nine months thou didst bear in thy sacred Womb ; whom thy virgin-Armes so often embrac'd ; whose chaste Breasts so often gave him suck ; whose purest Hands so many times wrapt him in humble swaddling-clothes. Who at his *Circumcision* gav'st him that sweet and amiable Name, *Jesus* ; who presentedst him in the Temple, as a most precious Oblation to God ; who fledst with him into *Egypt* ; and after thy return from thence, when going up to the solemn Festival at *Jerusalem*, and losing him, thou sought'st him with a solicitous and persevering diligence, and after three Days found'st him in the Temple with a joy as great as thy love. And so in all other things, during the whole course of his mortal Abode, wast thou intirely dedicated to thy blessed Son *Jesus* ; serving him with the tenderness of a Mother, the duty of a Hand-maid, and religion of a Votary. *Pray for us Sinners.* ]

O potent and pious Advocate of mankind, to you it is we address ourselves for Succour; we Sons of indignation, Sons of wrath, Sons of perdition, who through our manifold and grievous Offences, have forfeited all Right of being heard. We therefore fly to your Patronage, O sacred Mother of God, who are our Refuge, our Hope, our Comfort in tribulations: Vouchsafe to implore your dear Son's mercy and pardon for us your poor Suppliants, your Children, and his own Brethren: Despise not our Prayers in our Necessities; plead our Cause before him, who can refuse you nothing; pray for us, pray by us, pray with us; and deliver us from all dangers, O ever Glorious and Blessed Virgin. *Now.* ] During our abode in this Vale of tears, whether in Prosperity or Adversity, in Sicknes or Health; at all Times, and in all Places, and upon all Occasions intercede for us. *And at the hour of our Death.* ] But most especially in this our greatest Extremity take pity on us, O most compassionate and tender Mother; protect us, defend us, assist us; comfort, encourage, and strengthen us against the Assaults of our Enemies in that most dangerous Moment; and conduct our Souls at their departure hence to their prepar'd place of Eternal Rest; that we may there for ever See, blessed Jesus born of Thee.

*From the Dead  
stay not grace.*

*Eccli. 7. 37.*

*It is a holy and  
healthful cogi-  
tation to pray  
for the Dead,  
that they may  
be loos'd from  
their sins. 2.*

*Math. 12. 46.*

§. VIII. *And let them pray for the Dead.* ] Who implore their Assistance, crying out night and day for Relief, with those mournful words of Job 19. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my Friends, for the Hand of God has touch'd me.* Not that our Lay-Brothers by this Text are bound to say any particular, or certain number of Prayers for the Souls departed; but it is left to their devotion to say more or less, these or those. It is enough that in their Office, they Daily pray for the Dead; whether they do it at the end of every Hour after the manner of the Clerks;

or

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or at the end of their whole Office, or Apart by itself. It is true indeed that our Holy Founder in his First Rule appoints *Seven Pater-Nosters, with Eternal Rest.* But this is not of Obligation, no more than other things contain'd therein, or in his Testament, or other Works, which I have often cited in this Treatise; not by way of Obligation, but after the manner of Direction or Information, as Arguments of our Holy Father's meaning and Intention. And therefore I make use of his Authority (which ought to carry a great stroke with his Children, whatever part of his Writings it is drawn from) as a solid Ground, to strengthen several Texts of this Second Rule confirm'd by *Honorius the III*, which I here Expound, and which Alone *Frier-Minors* do promise to observe. And this I take notice of once for all.

1. Reg. c. 3.

Now for the discharge of this Christian Duty, as well for Clerks as Lay-Brothers, there are several powerful Motives to stir them up to the Relief of these distressed Souls, that lie groaning in the midst of those scorching flames of *Purgatory*, enkindl'd with the breath of the love and wrath of God; Flames, says *S. Austin*, more sensibly piercing, than any Torments what ever can be felt, seen, or imagin'd in this world. There is upon one side, Charity towards their *Neighbours, Friends, and Relations*; and on the other, Gratitude and Justice towards their *Benefactors*.

Motives to excite us to pray for the Dead.

Serm. 41.

First, the Providence of God, which disposes all things with so great Sweetness, has as it were tied the Salvation of those good Souls to the fervour of our Prayers and good Works, and would have us to be as Mediators and Intercessors of their felicity. Wherein we cannot fail without betraying our Soul, which inclines, out of a natural propension, to the sweetness and mercy we exercise even towards Beasts. It is the Argument which the Son of God made use

Blessed are the Merciful; for they shall obtain Mercy.  
Math. 5. 7.

of



*Math. 12. 11.* of. If a Horse, an Ox, a Sheep fall into a ditch, there is neither Festival nor *Sabbath* with-holds; every one who is able, stretches out a hand and draws it forth: And behold

The pains of Purgatory. here not a Beast, but a Soul created to the Image of God, irradiated with the most excellent lineaments of his Beauty, who is to live with Angels eternally, fallen into a ditch fallen into a boiling Furnace, who is afflicted, tormented, implores the help of all the world, and whilst we slacken to succour her, has these most pitiful words of the Prophet *Je-*

*Thren. 1. 12.* *remy*: Alas! God the just avenger of Crimes committed against his Divine Majesty, has pour'd Fire into my bones to chastize me. Behold me in the nets of Justice, behold me now desolate, pensive, and disconsolate both Night and Day. All afflicts me in this sad abode, but nothing is so irksome as the burthen of mine Iniquities and Ingratitudes: It is a Yoke that surcharges my neck like Lead, and pulls me down into these Torments, from whence I cannot go without your Charities. O you, my dear Kindred, Friends, and Allies, who pass through the Church-yard, made the Depository of my bones, consider and see with the eyes of Faith, whether there be any Dolour comparable to mine; since God has cut me off in the day of his Indignation, with a strong and inevitable Arm.

But besides this *Pain of Sense*, exercis'd by Fire the great Executioner of God's justice, there is another which these poor Souls suffer, that Divines call the *Pain of Loss*, far more grievous to them than the other; which consists in a Suspension from the sight of God, a matter very dolorous to a Soul, who being out of the Body, and far absented from her source, is as would the Globe of the earth be, were it out of its place, or like to Fire shut up in the bowels of Mount *Aetna*. She naturally desires to rejoyn herself to God, and the least Retardation she feels from such Felicity is most sensible

sensible to her. She mourns to be depriv'd of an infinite comfort, when the thirst is most ardent, and to see herself bereav'd by her own fault; yea, such a one as might easily been avoided. Behold in short, what the poor Souls in *Purgatory* endure.

Now, dear Brethren, God having given us means to oblige these afflicted Souls, these immortal Spirits, who will afterwards be our Friends, and will entertain no thoughts but such as may tend to render us the like; and to oblige them in a cause so great and eminent, that if all the Treasures and Lives of the world were dissolv'd into one Mass, they could not reach to the least degree of the Felicity we may procure them: And this being too a matter most easy for us, as consisting only in some Prayers and good Works, to neglect it, is it not a prodigious carelessness, and an unheard of cruelty towards our Neighbours, Kinsfolks and Acquaintance, most unworthy of Christians, and much more of Religious Men? *He that shall have the Substance of the world, says S. John, and shall see his Brother have need, and shall shut his bowels from him; how do's the charity of God abide in him?*

1. Joan. 3. 17.

The other Consideration is, that such neglect in regard of our Benefactors, is a piece of base Ingratitude; a crime odious to God, and abhorr'd by all noble and generous Souls. That Man is more unnatural than brute Beasts, that buries good turns in oblivion. An *Elephant*, who bears Towers and Houses upon his back, cannot carry a Benefit without a grateful acknowledgment of it. It is that, which quenches the fire that sparkles in the eyes of Lions, which stays their paws keen as Rasours, and makes them adore that, which is thrown out to them as a Prey to be devour'd. Benefits are the wings of Love, more swift than Tempests; they overtake Birds in their flight. We behold in History,

The great obligation incumbent on Religious Men to pray for their Benefactors.

T where

Plin. l. 10.  
Cap. 5.

Ælian. l. 8.  
Cap. 3.

where on one side a *Stork* comes to cast a precious Stone into the bosom of a Maid, which had heal'd her of a wound; and on the other side an *Eagle*, that seeing the body of a Young Man burnt, which had fed and cherish'd her, cast herself with alacrity into the flames of the enkindl'd Pile. Good turns are golden Nets, which catch the swiftest gliding Fishes; we find the proof hereof, when the *Dolphins* assembl'd in troops upon the Sea-shore, where they celebrated the Obsequies of one call'd *Ceramus*, who had before freed them from the snares of the Fisher-men. Benefits are sharp-pointed Arrows, which thoroughly penetrate the heart of Tygers and Lions. We find it in the History of *Androdon*, who, because he had pull'd a Thorn out of a *Lion's* foot, made a beast of Service of him, and led him through all the City of *Rome*, gentle and meek as a Lamb. O how strong Bird-lime is a Benefit! All generous Birds are taken with it, there is none but some certain ill-condition'd Owls, which escape from it.

As Gratitude is the Key of the Land flowing with milk and hony; so Ingratitude is a Channel, from whence all the Plagues of heaven pour down upon forgetful and unnatural Hearts. It is a lamentable thing to repay Benefits in the coin of Ingratitude. Yea, there are that stick not to give it (in Religious Men that live upon Charities, and neglect to pray for their Benefactors) the name of *Theft*, *Rapine*, and *Sacrilege*; esteeming it a most heinous Offence to defraud Benefactors, who bestow their Almes on us in hopes of a grateful Return on our parts; expecting by means of our Prayers, Spiritual Exercises, Mortifications, Fasts, and other meritorious works, to obtain pardon for their sins, and a gracious supply of their other necessities both Spiritual and Temporal in recompence thereof. Wherein if we fail, we render ourselves guilty before God, and may justly expect

expect in the other world our reward with Hypocrites. For it is a most shameful and ridiculous folly, says the great Chancellor *Gerson*, for a religious Mendicant, to desire and ask an abundance of Almes, and thereby load himself with a heap of Obligations of returning them in Spirituals, which increase in proportion to the Temporals he receives; if he lives after so loose a manner, that he has scarce wherewith to satisfy the Divine Justice for his own debts and transgressions. Such a one is an arrant Cheat, says he, deceiving both himself and his Neighbours, who think they maintain a good Religious Man, a Servant of God, and a potent Advocate; when as they bestow their Almes upon an Impostor, an idle Drone, a sensual Libertine, an infringer of his Vows, an enemy of God and Man.

*Alphab. 4.  
Littera E.*

Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let us take care how we cozen our Benefactors; let us shew ourselves diligent in Quire-duties, and in all other functions belonging to our Calling. Let us be punctual and exact in the observance of our holy Rule, and endeavour to procure a large Stock of virtuous and meritorious works, wherewith to gratify and relieve our Benefactors in time of Need. Pray therefore, dear Brother, says *S. Bonaventure*, and continually exercise thy self therein both Night and Day: For Everlasting Punishments are threatn'd to those that live upon Almes, and neglect to pray for their Benefactors. And *S. Bernard*, pray Brother, and pray earnestly, for he wears a Coat dip'd in Blood, who nourishes his Body with the sweat of the Poor, if he makes not a proportionable return by Prayer and Thanks-giving. For these Goods are given us in consideration of the Divine Service; and therefore let us not fail to send up to Heaven our sobbs and sighs in behalf of our Founders. Otherwise what we here swallow down in Delights, we shall hereafter be forc'd to vomit up again in never-ending  
Tij                      Torments.

Torments. Particularly let us be mindful of the poor Souls in *Purgatory*, as being unable to help themselves, and not deprive them of a right to our Suffrages, which they in their life-times most justly acquir'd with their Almshouses, and which we oblig'd ourselves to, by accepting and receiving the same. These devout and charitable People despoil'd themselves, their Children and Families, many times of Necessaries, to feed, clothe, warm and maintain us; themselves at the same time being cold, naked, half-starv'd. And now in time of their distress, of God's Visitation, for their Relief they claim the Debt, and we refuse to pay it. What account shall we give at the last Day? Who will plead our cause? Faithless, disloyal, and ungrateful as we are, what may we expect for our reward? *He that is deaf to the cries of the Poor, he himself shall cry out, and shall not be hear'd.* Behold the Malediction, which will follow us to our Graves; we ourselves shall be depriv'd of the Suffrages of the Living, who have been negligent to offer them up for the comfort of the Dead. And this may suffice to persuade us to our Duty, and prevail upon us, so far at least as to perform, besides our ordinary and daily task, those Offices our *Constitutions* injoin us in the Paragraph *Of suffrages for the Dead*, with all the devotion we are able; which is the least Charity we can do those faithful Souls.

O Jesus, most compassionate Redeemer! I here most humbly prostrate my self in thy presence, offering up in behalf of those poor Souls to the Throne of thy mercy, these small Devotions however imperfect, which I purpose to perform for that end; my Watchings, Fasting, Prayers, Sacrifices, Confessions, Communion, and particularly the Indulgences which through thy gracious bounty I hope to obtain; Uniting them to thine infinite Merits, and to those of thy Blessed Mother, and of all the glorious Saints of heaven; beseeching thy Goodness to accept them for satisfaction of their Punishments, for solace of their sufferings, and for their speedy admission to thy Beatifying presence.

§. IX.

§. IX. *And they shall fast.*] Both Clarks and Lay-Brothers, whether they are 21 Years old, or not. *From the feast of All-Saints.*] Exclusively: Animated by the Example, and assisted by the Intercession of so many valorous Champions and Servants of God, whose glorious memory the Church then celebrates; who, following their great Captain, the world's Saviour, in the high-way of the Cross, have climb'd up to heaven by Penance, Self-denials, Tears, Watchings, Sack-Cloth, Hair-Cloth, Afflictions, and Persecutions; taking the kingdom of God as it were by Violence. This Lent formerly was generally kept by the Faithful; some beginning it from the feast of *S. Martin*; and it was call'd *S. Ambrose's Fast*, he being the chief promoter of it; others beginning it from the first Sunday of *Advent*.

*Unto the Nativity of our Lord.*] Exclusively; unless this feast happen to fall upon a Friday. So to prepare themselves more worthily to receive our blessed Redeemer coming into the world. For Fasting has a marvellous efficacy to render us acceptable in the sight of God. It purifies both Bodies and Souls, and makes us as white as Lillies; being a Stream which waters and revives all Vertues, and which suffocates and kills all Vices. It is it, which God seems to have requir'd of Man from the worlds infancy, the first Tribute of sanctity and innocency, which our first Parents could not leave without losing themselves and all Posterity. It, which separates Sensitive man from the Intellectual; which raises us from the earth, and brings us near to heaven; which makes a noble Soul shine in a mortal Body, as a Torch of odoriferous wood in a chrystalline Watch-tower. It is the celestial *Manna*, the life of Angels, the refection of the Mind, the entertainment of the Soul, the death of Sin, the restorer of Innocency, the guardian of Chastity, the preserver of Health, the relief of the Poor, the bridle of our Passions, and enemy of Self-love.

Besides,

*I humb'd my  
Soul in fasting.  
Ps. 34. 13.  
They that (be  
Christ's, have  
crucify'd their  
flesh with its  
Vices and Con-  
cupiscences.  
Gal. 5. 24.*

The great  
Advantages  
of fasts en-  
courage us  
to the prac-  
tice thereof.

Dan. 10. 12.

Besides, Fasting has this particular advantage, to encourage us to the practice of it ; which is , that God is wont to hear the Prayers and Desires of those who mortify their Flesh, and afflict their Bodies by penance. *From the first day*, says the Angel to Daniel, *that you applied your mind to the understanding of spiritual things, by your afflicting your Body in God's presence, your Prayers were heard.* So that Daniel added Fasting to his Prayer, whereby he obtain'd the liberty of his People, and merited that God should reveal to him several great Mysteries, and bestow many signal Graces and Favours upon him. We see also that it is a Means, always very much practis'd by the Church, for the imploring God's assistance in those publick calamities it has suffer'd, and in all the wants and necessities of the Faithful. When an Infant expresses not its desire of the Breast by pressing and earnest signs, the Nurse oftentimes refuses it, or makes it stay the longer ; but when by Cries and Sobs it asks it, she cannot refuse the giving it presently. God treats us after the same manner, when we ask some Vertue, or a victory over some Temptation, or any other thing whatsoever ; and when we only offer up our Desires and Prayers to him, he often do's not grant us what we ask ; or at least he defers it for a long time. But when we join Penance to Prayer, when we mortify our Bodies, and afflict ourselves before him with Sack-clothes and Fasts, then we more easily and more certainly obtain all that we desire or wish for. God loves his Children very tenderly, and when he sees them torment and afflict their Bodies to obtain any thing of him, he has Compassion on them, and shews great Mercy towards them. If the Scripture says, that Joseph seeing the Tears and Afflictions of his Brethren, could not refrain any longer from discovering himself to them ; what will our Heavenly Father do to those whom he loves far more tenderly than Joseph lov'd his Brethren? What will Jesus-Christ

Gen. 45. 1.

*Christ* our Brother do, when he sees our mortifications, and the restraint we suffer during this time of Lent, depriving ourselves for his sake of what is most delightful and agreeable to Sensual Nature? It is therefore a Means which cannot but be of great advantage and profit to us all manner of ways; because God beholding our Humiliations and Afflictions, will hear our Prayers, and grant the accomplishment of our Desires.

O valorous Champions and Servants of God, who with continual Mortifications, despoil'd yourselves of the *Old Man*, to clothe yourselves with the *New*; obtain for us of your Captain *Jesus*, that by the means of Fasts we may receive all necessary helps for our Salvation; may make satisfaction for our Sins, and overcome our sensual rebellious Nature, striving after your Examples, to enter by the straight gate of Mortification and Penance: To the end, that acquiring by this means the perfect renovation of our Spirit here, we may deserve to possess hereafter that Fulness which you now enjoy as a reward of your Fasts; sitting with *Christ* at his Table in the kingdom of his Father, and eating of that delicious Food, whereof himself eats.

§. X. *But for the holy Lent, which begins from the Epiphany of our Lord.*] Exclusively. *Continuing out forty days, which our Lord consecrated by his own holy Fast,*] He beginning it in the wilderness upon *Twelfth-Day*; which is the very same with that of his holy *Baptism*, which so soon as he had receiv'd at his Precursors hands, *Forthwith the Spirit drove him out into the Desert. Where he fasted forty days and forty nights.* And this is the reason, why our Holy Founder, that he might not depart one single Hair's-breadth from the foot-steps of his dear Lord and Master, has ordain'd this forty-days Fast, in imitation of his; Yet without imposing the same under obligation, but leaving it to the devotion of his Children, that so they may be the better able to comply with their obligation of the ensuing Fast, impos'd by the Church upon all the Faithful. And therefore it follows.

*They*

*Marc. i. 12.*

*Math. 4. 2.*



What are the  
Blessings we  
reap by this  
Fast.

*They that will fast it, be they Blessed of our Lord; and they that will not, let them not be Oblig'd.]* Be they Blessed of our Lord; be they replenish'd with Gifts, Favours, and Vertues from on high. Some with efficacious grace to overcome Temptations: Others with patience and resignation in Adversity: Others with zeal for Regular Observance: Others with the love of holy Poverty: Others with prompt Obedience: Others with fraternal Charity and tenderness of Affection towards their Brethren: Others with the gift of Continency, and such other Blessings as each one stands in need of for his Salvation; and which dutiful Children may hope to obtain at Almighty God's hands, both for themselves and the Community, as a reward of their Fasting, and of their ready Compliance with the request of their Founder, so pious a Father, so powerful an Advocate, and so great a Servant of God. According to that of *Ecclesiasticus*: *In work and word, and all patience honour thy Father, that Blessing may come upon thee from him, and his Blessing may remain in the latter end. The Father's Blessing establishes the houses of the Children.*

*Eccli. 3. 9.*

O sweet Jesus I render thee most humble thanks for this thy so rigorous Fast of 40 Days, which thou suffer'dst in satisfaction of my manifold Sins; whereby I beseech thee to forgive them; and so to assist me with thy grace, that my Body may fast by forbearing Meats, and my Spirit by refraining Vices: To the end, I may thereby deserve to obtain thy holy Benediction, whereof our blessed Founder, relying on thy bounteous Liberality, like a loving Father do's here give his Children a comfortable Assurance, sweetly to allure and animate them to the Imitation of thy most holy Fast.

*If we do not  
Penance, we  
shall fall into  
the bands of  
our Lord.*  
*Eccli. 2. 22.*

*§. XI. But let them fast that other.]* Call'd the Church-Lent, bound thereto both by the Church, and their Rule. *Unto the Resurrection of our Lord.]* So to do penance for their

# §. XI.

## *Their Fasts.*

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their Sins, to subdue their Sensualities, mortify their Passions, reconcile themselves to God; to condole with their blessed Redeemer, and renew in them the Memory of his most sacred Passion; and lastly to prepare themselves for that great solemnity of the Resurrection, and the more worthy receiving of the holy *Eucharist*, which the Church then requires of the Faithful. With these considerations, let us courageously enter the List with so many Valiant ones. Let us lay hold of this acceptable Time, these days of Salvation; assuring ourselves, *that if we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorify'd with him.* For as the great *S. Leo* says, There is most certain hopes of Resurrection, where there is a participation of our Lords Passion.

For what ends is this Fast instituted.

*Rom. 8. 17.*

*Serm. 9. de Quadrag.*

Lent is the Spring-time for all good purposes and sanctify'd resolutions, it mortifies the Flesh, that the Spirit may triumph. Our Soul and Body are as the scales of a Ballance, if you pull down the one, you raise up the other; and if you tame your Flesh, it makes the Spirit to reign and govern. It imports extreamly to commend all to God at the beginning of our Fasts, to sanctify and render them acceptable to him. We must therein religiously abstain from certain Meats prescrib'd by the Church, and be content with one Meal at seasonable hours, without anticipating, or prolonging the ordinary Time, but upon some just occasion, and without making over large Collations; except Age, Infirmary, Weakness, Labour, or Necessity shall dispense with our Diet. For those who are unable to fast, suffer more by their Disability, than others do by Fasting. We must also, and that chiefly, fast by abstinence from Vice: For to weaken our Bodies, and yet to nourish our naughty Passions, is to fast as the Devils do, who eat nothing, and yet devour the world by the rage of their Malice. And therefore *Ecclesiastical* says: *A man that fasts in his Sins, and doing the same again, what do's*

*Ecdi. 34. 32.*

V

he

*he profit in humbling himself? Who will bear his Prayer?*

A word of  
advice to  
nice, and un-  
mortified  
Souls.

For the rest, let us remember ourselves, that we are call'd to Christianity to bear a God Crucify'd on our Flesh, and as it were impress'd with the character of Divine Love. Let us not betray our Profession. Let us take care not to prostitute Members to Sensuality, made to be the Temple of the living God, and the Ornament of Paradise. We were created for the contemplation of things Divine, for the love and fruition of the First Cause; let us beware how we rank ourselves amongst Beasts, those Carnal Souls, who enamour'd of their Healths, become suppliant and servile to a wretched Body, which do's many times to their Spirits, what the *Heron* do's to the *Falcon*. He endeavours to fly about him, and to wet his wings with his excrements, to make his flight heavy, and render his purpose unprofitable. Alas! how many times feel we the vigor of our Reason enervated by the assaults of Concupiscence, which contracts the like advantage from its Ordures, for the enthrallment of the Spirit? And why should we second its violence by our weakness? Our Holy Founder greatly reprehends such Bond-slaves, such penitent Nicelings, such Self-lovers, who, notwithstanding their strong Constitutions, are not asham'd to let loose the reins to their Sensual Appetites, without any Necessity having recourse to dispensations and exemptions from Fasting, out of a vain apprehension they have that it is prejudicial to their Healths; of whom he speaks after the following manner.

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Collat. 10.*

„ A Necessity, says he, which Sensuality, not Reason  
„ suggests, to follow it, is a manifest sign of a decay'd Spi-  
„ rit, which, becoming cold for want of devotion and the  
„ love of God, gives full scope to flesh and blood to seek  
„ what is their own. For how can it otherwise be, but that  
„ the Body should follow its Carnal Pleasures, when the Soul  
„ has no longer any Spiritual Delights? And then it is, that  
Sensuality

„ Sensuality makes a cloke for Necessity, alledging vain  
 „ pretences, and that flesh and blood rule our Consciences.  
 „ If a Brother has something of a Necessity, what reward  
 „ can he expect, if he presently seek to content it? He had  
 „ an occasion of Merit presented him, but by doing so, he  
 „ plainly shews that it is not acceptable to him. So far our  
 Holy Father to his Children. Not to be willing to deny our  
 Body any thing, nor to suffer our little wants in Religion,  
 is to return again to the flesh-pots and onions of *Egypt*.  
 We that have dedicated ourselves to Mortification and Pe-  
 nance, it is our parts to give good Example, and observe all  
 Fasts in their full rigor, thereby to take away the occasion  
 from Seculars of exempting themselves upon light and trivial  
 pretences. " We *Frier-Minors* were therefore given to the  
 „ Church, says our Holy Founder in another place, that we  
 „ might be Witnesses and Followers of *Christ's* great Auste-  
 „ rity, Sobriety and Temperance; by exciting the Faithful  
 „ to the practice of these Vertues, and renewing in them the  
 „ memory of his venerable Passion, by our sufferings, mor-  
 „ tifications and labours; and by an undefil'd Purity of body  
 „ and soul to be acquir'd by the help of Fasts, and by sub-  
 „ jecting our Sensual Appetite to Reason. It is true, that  
 so long as we are inviron'd with this mass of Flesh, we can-  
 not be without the Necessities of life; but these are very  
 few, if we regard *Nature*; though infinite, and which the  
 whole World is not able to furnish, if we attend to and  
 humour our *Sensuality*. Our Bodies only want meat and  
 drink; Nature is sufficiently supply'd with ordinary food;  
 hunger and cold are driven away with course fare and a  
 plain simple garment. And therefore the Apostle says: *Ha-*  
*ving food, and wherewith to be cover'd, with these we are*  
*content.* But gorgeous Attire, vain Delights, Tables set out  
 with variety of dishes and sauces, are the Tinders of lust.

*Opusc. dub.*  
*Aspend.*  
*Cur FF. M.M.*  
*concessi sunt*  
*Ecclesiæ.*

1. Tim. 6. 8.

Ep. 171.

as well as Destroyers of health. Our Body is the slave of Custom; what it has been us'd to, that it esteems. It disdaineth Course things, because it has tasted Dainties. But know, says the wise *Seneca*, what ever exceeds Nature, that is precarious, not necessary. I am hungry, I must eat; but whether it be White bread or Brown, it is one and the same thing to Nature, which seeks only to fill the Belly, not to delight it. I thirst; but whether it be Snow-water I use to allay it, or water taken from the next Pond, Nature cares not; she only commands me to quench my Thirst: Whether I drink out of a golden Cup, a Glass, or an earthen Pott, she matters not. Hunger calls upon me, I fall upon the first Dish I meet with, what ever it is, Nature recommends it to me; a hungry Stomach refuses nothing. Thus discourseth this great *Moralist*, from whom we learn a good lesson of Contentment. If a Religious Man would accustom himself, and rest satisfy'd with the Allowance of his *Monastery*, which is ever abundantly sufficient for Nature even in the strictest Fasts, he would free himself from many wants; but if he seek to pamper his Carcass, his sensual Appetite will suggest to him and counterfeit a thousand Necessities, which will give him trouble enough; and bring him at last to that pass, that neither Orchards nor Gardens, Town nor Country, Fish nor Flesh will content him. Would to God, we might once again see that spirit of the Ancient Monks to flourish in our Cloisters, of whom *S. Hierom* gives a relation in his twenty second Epistle to *Eustochius* in these words: I pass over in silence, says he, their Meat and Drink; seeing there are those among them to be found, who being ready to faint, will scarce venture to take as much Cold Water as may suffice to quench their Thirst, and revive their drooping Nature; and with whom, to taste any thing that is Boil'd, is accounted Gluttony.

O Sweet Redeemer ! How dear do our Gluttonies cost thee ? It cannot be said of thee, *Their Fathers did eat a sour Grape, and the Teeth of the Children are set on edge* ; but contrarywise we thy Children have eat the sour Grapes, the sourness of Sins, and thy Teeth are set on edge ; thou suffering the Torments which we deserv'd for them. Pardon, dear Lord, I beseech thee, the Gluttonies I have committed, and all other Sins of my life, and be graciously pleas'd to accept this my Fast, which I dedicate to the memory of thy most holy Passion, in satisfaction for them. And may it beso Strict an one, that like the *Ninivites*, I may therewith appease thy Wrath, overcome my Passions, terrify the Devils, edify my Neighbours, joy the Angels, and merit Everlasting Glory.

*Jerem. 31. 29.*

S. XII. *At other times let them not be oblig'd to fast.* ] By virtue of their Rule ; but by the Precept of the Church, which obliges them upon Vigils, and Ember-days ; which therefore the Brethren are to fast, after the manner of Seculars, to wit when they are at Age. *Except Friday.* ] In honour of *Christ's* Passion ; which is to observ'd upon all Fridays of the year, even upon *Christ-Mass* day itself, when it falls on a Friday, as we said above. So not to pass over one only Week throughout the whole Year, without some remembrance of the Vinegar and Gall, which our blessed Redeemer was pleas'd to take for satisfaction of our sins upon the day of his Crucifixion. We account it no small honour to be invited to a Prince's Table, and to eat of his own peculiar Dish ; and shall we esteem it any less favour to partake of this Cup with *Jesus-Christ*, the sovereign Wisdom, and make bitter our Tongues in subduing with him the pleasures of Taste ? Were there no other fruit in mortifying our sensual Appetites, and subjecting them to Reason, but the the Conformity we thereby have with our dear Saviour's Passion, it would be highly recompenc'd. Wherefore, Brethren, let us always set before our eyes this most acceptable Cup of our Lord *Jesus*, therewith to season our Fasts ; and

*They gave Gall  
for my meat,  
and in my  
thirst they ga-  
ve me Vinegar  
to drink. Ps.  
68. 22.*

Ought not  
Christ to have  
suffer'd these  
things, and so  
to enter into his  
Glory? *Luc.*  
24. 26.

and other Austerities of the Order. Let us always have in view Mortification and Penance; considering with ourselves, that if it was necessary the Son of God should drink Vinegar and Gall to enter into Glory, which was due to him; how much more need have we unworthy Sinners of it, to arrive at the Kingdom of Heaven, to which we have no right?

*Exod. 15.*

The Sufferings of our Saviour very proper to season our fasts and other mortifications.

The holy Scripture tells us, that the Children of *Israel* found the Waters of *Mara* so bitter, that they could not drink of them: Upon which *Moses* fell to his prayers, and Almighty God shew'd him a sort of Wood, which being thrown into the Water, render'd it very sweet and pleasant. This was a figure of the Wood of the holy Cross, which sweetens all our Fasts and Mortifications though never so bitter and painful. The memory of *Christ's* Sufferings, of the Gall and Vinegar they gave him to drink, is sufficient to make all our pains easy and pleasant, and moisten that dry morsel of Bread, which alone we ordinarily have at our *Colations*, with a tasteful sweetness; which otherwise to Libertines and sensual Religious seems very harsh and insipid, when not season'd with some motive of Piety. It is this Example of our Lord and Master *Jesus-Christ*, which *S. Paul* makes use of to encourage us, and invites us to follow it in these words: *Arm'd with patience*, says he, *let us run to the Combat propos'd to us, having our eyes constantly fix'd upon Jesus-Christ, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who contemning ignominy, dy'd with satisfaction upon a Cross. Think continually upon those Contradictions he suffer'd from Sinners, barely that you should not relent, and be dejected; for as yet you have not resisted to the shedding of your Blood, in fighting against Sin.* This Means has all along been very much practis'd by all holy Men; there being nothing more powerful to excite a generous mind to Mortification and Penance, than the Example of our Redeemer. For  
how

*Neb. 12. 1.*

how is it possible, that a man form'd of Dirt, and a mere Worm of the earth, should look upon any Suffering or Mortification too great, after he has seen his God crown'd with Thorns, and nail'd to a Cross for love of him? And who is there that is not ready to suffer and expiate his own Sins, that has seen the God of Majesty, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, suffer so much for him? Besides, it is an Exercise of the highest Perfection, and adds a new value to our good Works; because it animates them with an ardent Love of God. For holy Men reflecting, that our Saviour has chalk'd out to them the way of Mortification, and that he lov'd his Cross so dearly, as to shed his very last drop of Blood upon it for our Redemption: And as Naturalists say, that *Elephants* become more furious in battel, at the sight of Blood; so they take more courage, and burn with a greater love and desire of Martyrdom, when they behold the sacred Blood of our Saviour shed so plentifully for their sakes: But not being able to become Masters of their wishes, they even become their own Executioners, by long fasts, watchings and macerations of the Flesh, whereby they abate their great thirst of Suffering, having the satisfaction to have come as near our Saviour's practice and example, as they were able. Thus ought we *Frier. Minors* to do, *Carrying always the Passion of Jesus-Christ on our Bodies, to the end that the Life of Jesus-Christ may appear in us.* That is, we ought so to treat our Bodies with suffering and mortification, that they may always represent to us the Life and Death of our Saviour. Niceness and delicacy, says *S. Bernard*, are very misbecoming a Head crown'd with Thorns. Let us therefore afflict and crucify our Flesh, that we may be the more like our Head *Jesus-Christ*, whose Members we are.

2. Cor. 4. 10.

Serm. 7. Quadr.

O my dear Master! in imitation of thee, I desire ever to season my Meat and Drink, with Worm-wood, Ashes, or some other bitter



bitter and disagreeable Sauce; mindful of the Torments which thou suffer'dst for me, and of the Gall and Vinegar which thou drank'st for me.

*To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak.*  
1. Cor. 9. 22.

§. XIII. *And in time of Manifest Necessity the Brethren shall not be bound to corporal Fast.*] Then is there a *Necessity*, when Old Age, Infirmary, Weakness, Labour &c. require Meat, or more than one Meal a day. And it is *Manifest*, when it is clear and evident to any judicious, prudent, and conscientious Person. But if there is doubt of it, then are the Brethren to stand to the judgement of the Physician; and if he be absent, to the Superiour's, who, besides his judgement of the case of *Necessity*, has power to dispense with his Subjects upon any reasonable motive; and consequently has authority, prudently to supply what is sometimes wanting of a *Manifest Necessity*. To whom therefore we must have recourse, and not be our own Carvers, if we will discharge a good conscience in this matter; Unless in case the Physician and Superiour be both absent, then he that suffers the *Necessity*, may resolve himself with the advice of his Confessor, when he is to be had.

Indiscreet  
Fasts condemn'd by  
our Holy  
Father.

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Collat. 8.*

By this Text, our blessed Founder gives us to understand, that he do's not approve, but condemn those great Auste-  
rities and extraordinary Mortifications, which some indis-  
creet Brethren inflict upon their Bodies: Wherein *Pride*,  
*Self-will* and *Hypocrisy* commonly have a greater share,  
than any true sincere and solid Devotion. That these are our  
Holy Father's Sentiments, is clear from his other Works, where  
he writes thus: " My dearly beloved Brethren, we must  
,, prudently provide our brother Body of all its Necessities,  
,, for fear it should raise a tempestuous and dangerous Storm  
,, of spiritual sloth and heaviness in our Souls. For a Servant  
,, of God in eating, drinking and sleeping, and taking his  
,, other Corporal Necessities, ought with discretion to content  
,, his

**S. XIII.**

*Their Fasts.*

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his Body, and afford it all reasonable satisfaction; lest for want of it, Watching, Prayer, Meditation, and other our Spiritual Exercises become irksome and tedious to us. In such sort Care must be taken, that our brother Body may have no just occasion to murmur, and say: I faint for hunger, I am not able to bear the burden you lay upon me; I can't stand up-right, nor assist at Quire-duties, I'm out of heart, I want strength, I can't rejoyce in Tribulations, nor perform with Alacrity my other good works; because you do not supply my Necessities. Wherefore, my Brethren, let every one consider his own Nature: For though some of you perhaps may be able to pass with less food than other some; yet I will not have him that stands in need of more, to follow his example that can content himself with less. But let every Body take his Necessity in the name of God, as his Constitution and Temper requires. For as in eating and drinking, we are oblig'd to avoid such superfluity as is prejudicial to Body and Soul; so on the other side, we ought to refrain from all such kind of hurtful and indiscreet Fasts; the rather, because *God will* Collar. 9.  
*have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.* Osee. 6. 6.

O my Soul! remember that Virtue consists in a Mean, that nothing is commendable and pleasing to God which is not season'd with Prudence, and that thou art a Lord, but not a Tyrant set over thy Body. Observe therefore this golden Mediocrity in the management of it, treat it as thy Servant and Domestick; but not as thy Slave; allow it Necessaries, but not Superfluities; feed it, but cram it not; nourish it, but not pamper it; make it strong, but not wanton; cherish it discreetly, with a temperance secur'd between Immoderation and Insensibility, that it may obey thy Reason, and thy Reason obey thy Creator. O Eternal Wisdom! teach me this most necessary lesson, to observe this sacred Mean in all my practices of piety and devotion; that by its wise conduct keeping my Body in due Subjection, I may advance daily in the practice of solid Virtues, and arrive finally at thee, my God, my Eternal bliss and beatitude,

X

beatitude, the only end and aim of all the Watchings, Fasting, Disciplines, Penances, Austerities and Mortifications of this Body, which thou hast given as an Instrument for me to work my Salvation.

How the  
Fasts of the  
Rule are to  
be kept.

§. XIV. Now as to the Manner of keeping the Fasts of the Order, it is to be regulated according to the custom of Countries, and the common way of fasting of Seculars out of Lent: So that if these allow eating White-Meats and Eggs in the common fasts of the Church out of Lent, as in *Germany* and other Places, then may the Brethren in these Countries make use of them in the fasts of the Order. Otherwise not, as in *Italy* and other Countries, where they have plenty of Oil, Wine, Fruits &c. to supply the want of our White-Meats and Eggs. Custom likewise and the manner of fasting of the Country bear great sway in regulating our *Collations*. For what else concerns Fasting, I leave my Brethren to consult Divines, who will instruct them how they may proceed herein, without transgressing the rules of Ecclesiastical Fasts, which are the same with ours, as to other particulars.

what Fasts  
our Holy  
Founder  
observ'd.

I will now conclude the subject of Fasting, with taking notice, that our blessed Founder, besides the four above mentioned Fasts, not content therewith for his own particular, added four others to them, which he observ'd most exactly, and with great reverence and devotion. One whereof he dedicated in honour of the Holy Ghost. Another to our Blessed Lady, which began from the feast of *SS. Peter and Paul*, and continu'd to the *Assumption*, to recommend himself and his little Flock to the particular protection of this Queen of Angels. A third in honour of *S. Michael* and of those Angelical Spirits, which the holy Church commemorates on that Festival: And this began from the *Assumption* of our Lady, continuing 40 days; wherein he receiv'd on his sacred Body those wonderful *Stigmata* of our Lord  
*Jesus.*

*Jesus.* And lastly a fourth he consecrated to the memory of the twelve Apostles, towards whom he bare also a singular devotion, for their immense charity to their Master, and zeal for the Salvation of men. In all which he made so little account of his Flesh, abandoning it to that degree, that he seem'd not to hold of the Earth and of the necessities of Nature, but by the Soles of his feet; exercising himself in all sorts of austerities and mortifications, in watching, praying, in most glorious actions, in Contemplations, in Lights: So that his Body towards the latter end of his days was worn out with Mortification and Penance, wasted, dry'd up, and as it were in a manner vapour'd out into the substance of his *Seraphical Spirit*.

O Holy Spirit of God, fortify my feeble spirit, to the end I may after the example of our blessed Founder, with rigor chastize my Flesh; so to be able to triumph over mine Enemies, the World, the Flesh and the Devil, and daily to profit in Contemplation and celestial Vertues; encreasing like the light of the Morning until the height of perfect Day, till I come to enjoy thee in Holy *Sion*.

§. XV. *Moreover I counsel, admonish, and exhort my Brethren in our Lord Jesus-Christ, that when they travel through the world.*] When some urgent and necessary Occasions call them Abroad: Such as are, Preaching, hearing Confessions, visiting the Sick, begging Almes, business and affairs of the House, works of Obedience, their own or their neighbours Spiritual Good, or what ever else may oblige Religious men sometimes to leave their Convents with edification and honour. Otherwise if there be none of these Excuses, it were better we should stay at Home; where in our little Cells we enjoy the sweet presence of the well-beloved of our Souls with all freedom and security, without danger of losing or offending him: Whereas by leaving

Going Abroad, unleas upon very urgent Occasions, greatly prejudicial to Religious Persons.

X ij our

our Convents, we run the risk of both, according to what *S. Bonaventure* in his *Spec. Disc.* p. 1. c. 34. has observ'd. We have often experienc'd, says he, both in ourselves and others, that frequent going Abroad and conversing with the world exposes us to many Temptations and Dangers, and a thousand Inconveniencies there are that attend it. It extinguishes in us the Spirit of Devotion, cools the fervour of the mind, weakens the strongest purposes, it dissolves our Hearts in carnal pleasures, renders us contemptible to Seculars, withdraws us from the immediate obedience of Superiours, teaches us to love and hunt after sensual delights, to admire worldly vanities, to spend our time without profit, to multiply idle words, to accustom-ourselves to jesting and scurrilous discourses, to play the Buffoons, neglect our Prayers, grow weary of a Community-life, to loath Regular Observance; insinuate to become wholly Secular, and by conversing much with the world to return again to the world: After the manner of Salt, which, being by Art extracted from Water<sup>1</sup>, becomes a hard and solid Body, useful and fit to season things; but if you cast it again into the Water, it presently dissolves, loses its Virtue, and returns into the Element from whence it came. Of such Religious we may say, what the Royal Prophet did of the *Israelites*: *They were mingl'd among the Heathens, and learn'd their works; and they serv'd their Idols, which were a Snare to them.* The like happens to you by your Conversation with Worldlings; you thereby learn to speak their Language, and to follow their Fashions, you are taken with their Idols, which are Vanity and Self-love; and like them, you are fill'd with yourself, seeking in all things your own glory and satisfaction.

If we desire to entertain the devotion and reverence of the People towards us, we must converse no more with them than Necessity requires. Because Familiarity is apt to beget

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Bf. 105. 33.

in man a certain undervaluing and contempt in regard of such as he has frequent occasion to deal with. We are all, though never so perfect and accomplish'd, full of many Imperfections, incident to Humane Nature; the knowledge whereof so soon as discover'd, lessens in us the esteem of those People, whom before we had a veneration for. And this is the Cause, why those Seculars that converse Daily with Religious persons, and are admitted as familiar Friends into the inward Offices of their Convents, are observ'd to set a less value upon their Profession, and yield them less Respect, than others do that seldomer see them. We resemble Pictures, which being lookt upon at some Distance, are held in delight and admiration; but if you come Nearer to them, they appear coarse, vulgar, and deform'd, and lose that Value you before set upon them; because the Eye then at hand, perceives some Defects, which before, by reason of their Distance, remain'd undiscern'd.

Add to all this, the Reason which *S. Basil* brings, why we ought more especially to avoid all Commerce with our Friends and Relations in the world; which is, lest the natural Tendernefs which we have for them, should render us too Sensible of what happens to them, and make too lively an Impression upon our minds. Because it is impossible to visit them frequently without naturally rejoycing at their Prosperity, or afflicting ourselves for their Adversity, and disquieting and imbroiling ourselves with a thousand Cares. We are continually thinking, if they stand not in need of something; what it is they want; whether such an Employment will turn to their profit; whether such a Design will succeed; and whether they will acquit themselves with honour in such an Affair? All these Thoughts and Disquiets do so weaken the Spiritual Man within us, that the least Temptation is able to cast us down. We are in this state, only

*In Quest. sum-  
mus Disput. 3<sup>o</sup>*

Conversati-  
on with our  
Friends and  
Relations in  
a special  
manner to be  
avoided.

LUC. 14. 26.

only like Religious Statues, that bear the habit of Religion, but neither have the life nor vertue of it; and whilst our Body is shut up in our cell, our Mind is elsewhere, and our Imagination rambles amongst our Relations and Acquaintance in the world. If you be dead and crucify'd with *Jesus-Christ*, and to your Friends according to the Flesh, why do you seek again after them? But if you desire it for love of them, and to re-establish that in yourself, which you have destroy'd for the love of *Jesus-Christ*; do you not deceive and betray yourself? For if any *Man* come to me, says our *Saviour*, and hates not his *Father* and *Mother*, and *Wife* and *Children*, and *Brothers* and *Sisters*, yea and his own *Life*, he cannot be my *Disciple*. Wherefore let not their consideration make you leave the Place, where God has put you; for the farther you go from it, the farther you withdraw yourself from the Spirit of your Vocation. The Blessed *Virgin* and *S. Joseph* found not *Jesus-Christ* amongst their Kinsfolks and Acquaintance, and can you hope to find him amongst your Parents, since he was not to be found amongst his own? It is in the Church, it is in Retirement, and in Prayer, we must seek him, and it is there we shall find him.

O unexhaustible Fountain of all beauties, that my Soul has been long alienated from thee! I have so many times run after the vain pleasures and contentments of worldly Conversation, which have extinguish'd in me thy holy Spirit, and fill'd my Mind with disquiets and remorse. But now (O sweet Saviour) my Soul (being weary and disgusted with all the fading delights of this Transitory world) do's languish incessantly after thee. Thy Beauties are without stain, thy Goodness without reproach, and thy Conversation without importunity. God forbid! I should be of the number of those Souls which are distasted with *Manna*, and long after the Onions of *Egypt*. What precious thing is to be gotten by following the World, that I should forsake thee in my cell, and run after my Friends and Relations abroad? No,  
my

my dear Master, I seek and desire thy Entertainments at home, which are the only sweet Ideas of my Soul. I there plunge myself within the contemplation of thy greatness, I adore thy powers. The Thirst which torments me ( by loving thee ) is so precious, that I would not lose it to drink *Nectar*. And I can never quench it, but in the streams of those delights and pleasures, which proceed from the Throne of the holy Lamb.

But if at any time a just Occasion shall oblige the Brethren to go Abroad, and converse with the world, then our Holy Founder counsels, admonishes, and exhorts them in our Lord *Jesus-Christ*, that they stand upon their guards, and in their Conversation with men observe the following Rules; which are the same with those our Saviour prescribed to his Apostles, when *He sent them two and two before his face into every City and Place whither himself would come*. First, that they have a special care,

*Luc. 10. 1.*

*They do not strive or contend with Words.*] Be quarrelsome, contentious, stiff and obstinate in defending their opinions; eager, violent, clamorous, harsh, rude, reflecting; cholerick, imperious, exceptionous, fretful, cross, churlish, unsociable: All these being disobliging, and against good Manners as well as injurious to Brotherly Charity; both which forbid us to give any occasion of Offence to our neighbour. Wherefore let us carefully avoid entering into dispute or contending with any one; of which *S Paul* also gives us warning, when writing to *Timothy* he says: *Do not dispute or contend in words, for it serves for nothing else but to subvert and give Scandal to the Hearers*. And a little after he adds: *A servant of God must not be contentious, but mild and sweet towards all men, and be patient, and apt to learn*. All the Saints recommend the same thing to us. *S. Dorotheus* says, that he had rather things should be left undone, than perceive any disputes or contests arise amongst Brethren in doing them. *S. Bonaventure*

*Let there be no Strife, I pray thee, between me and thee: For we be Brethren. Gen. 13. 8.*

*1. Tim. 2. 14.*

*2. Tim. 2. 24.*

like-



Pride the  
chief cause  
of Strife.

likewise affirms, there is nothing more unworthy or misbecoming Gods Servants, than to be at variance and contend one with another about nothing, as Women are wont to do. And *S. John Climachus* moreover assures us, that Obstinacy, though it be in a matter of Truth, can come from none but the Devil. The reason is; because that which usually moves a man to maintain his own Opinion with any heat, is the desire he has of being esteem'd, from whence proceeds, that to appear more able or knowing than his Adversary, he endeavours to convince him that he is in an Errour; or if he cannot come off victoriously in his Dispute, he endeavours at least to make it appear he had not the worst on't; and thus it is always the Devil of Pride, that is the occasion of his Obstinacy, which makes him pass for a Quarrellsome person, who is ty'd to his own Opinion, and seeks always to have the upper hand, never yielding upon any account to another. It is recounted of *S. Thomas of Aquin*, that in his Disputations, he always propos'd his Opinion with meekness and sweetness, with an unspeakable moderation, without any shew of presumption, and without the least offence to any one; but carry'd himself as a Man who regarded not gaining the Victory, but merely endeavour'd to make known the Truth.

There are no Persons so perfect and accomplish'd, even in Religion, who have not their weakneses and defects, which who practice not to digest through Christian Patience, shall become not unlike a *Sea-Calf*, said always to be muddy against his fellow. Imagine with yourself we are in this world as in a Ship; if there happen a Leak, and it receive water, every Body seeks to stop it presently, to prevent its sinking; and if there be nothing ready at hand to put into it, they set their foot upon it, rather than pierce round about it, to make the Leak wider. A word, or indiscreet action  
has

has escap'd your Brother; to what purpose to reproach, or pick Quarrels with him for it on all occasions? Rather use the speediest Remedies you may; and, if none be at hand, bury it in Silence. *But if you bite and eat one another, take heed,* says the Apostle, *you be not consum'd one of another.*

Gal. 5. 15.

Eccli. 6. 5.

Prov. 15. 1.

*A sweet word*, according to the Wise-Man, *multiplies Friends, and appeases Enemies*: And on the contrary, *A Harsh word raises up Fury*; occasions quarrels, animosities and debates. For, we being all of us Men, these sort of words touch us to the Quick, and when our Mind is once incens'd, we look not upon our Brother as we did before, but presently find something blame-worthy in his Conduct; and sometimes stop not at blaming him only in our Hearts, but go farther in detracting and speaking ill of him before others, and so make him lose his Reputation, the most precious Treasure he has in the world. This being so, it is of very great importance that our Discourse be always so season'd with sweetness and affability, that thereby we gain the good will of our Brethren, according to that saying of the Scripture, *A prudent*

Eccli. 20. 13.

*Man renders himself amiable by his words.* Which we shall not fail to do, if we become truly Humble, and esteem ourselves the least of all. We need not any other Caution than this; this alone is sufficient to teach us how to carry ourselves towards all the world; so that we shall never utter a hasty word, at which any one may be offended; but we shall always speak to every Body with respect and sweetness. It is certain, that a simple Religious will never take the liberty to speak otherwise to his Superiour, than as it becomes him; because, considering himself as his Inferiour, he has a Respect for him; and when it happens that he speaks sharply to his Brother, it is because he thinks himself not Inferiour to him, and therefore respects him not as otherwise he would do. Wherefore let us be Humble, and we shall soon learn what

Humility the  
best remedy  
against it.

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language

language to use in our Conversation, and after what manner we ought to speak to our Brother, to prevent the disorders that are wont to arise from Strife and Contention.

O meek and merciful Redeemer ! give me true Humility, whereby to avoid all harsh, imperious, and provoking Language towards my Neighbour. O guide and govern my Tongue ; purify my life, and actions, my carriage, and conversation ; and give me grace to look always upon the perfect Pattern of thy lovely Comportment amongst men ; so full of Mildness, Affability and Courtesy. O that I could behave myself discreetly, lovingly, gently, quietly, sweetly towards all sort of People upon earth ; till it shall please thy goodness, O my Gracious God, to translate my peaceable Spirit to the more amiable Company of thy eternally blessed Saints and heavenly Inhabitants ; where are no jars nor discords, but a perpetual union and harmony reigns.

That Frier-  
Minors ac-  
cording to  
their Rule  
are to go  
Two and  
Two.

6. g. p. 2.

Math. 18. 20,

From this Text, say Expositors, it is clear, that the intention of our Holy Founder is, that his Brethren do accompany one another when they go abroad ; for if they go Alone, how should they strive or contend with words ? Which is according to the Holy Gospel [ *Luc. 10.* ] which *Frier-Minors* in a particular manner make profession to observe ; where the Disciples by our Lord's command, are sent Two and Two to preach the Gospel over the world. And for this reason the *Statutes* of our Order, conform to the present Text, do strictly injoin, that no Brother go out of his Convent without a Companion, nor stay any where without him. We know, the Disciples of *Emanuel*, being Two on the road, were honour'd with the Presence of their divine Master ; and so shall we when we Travel together, if, free from strife and contention, we entertain ourselves with pious discourses, in union and brotherly love ; according to our Saviour's own faithful promise : *Where there are Two or Three gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* It is

is better therefore, says the Wise Man, that *Two be together, than One*; for they have profit of their Society: If *One fall, he shall be stay'd up of the Other. Wo to him that is Alone!* because when he falls, he has none to lift him up. And if *Two sleep together, they shall warm each other: One how shall he be warm'd?* If a *Man prevail against One, Two resist him: A Tripple Cord is hardly broken.* How much then are those Superiours worthy of blame, who having little or no regard to the *Constitutions* in this point, send their Religious indifferently abroad upon all occasions Alone, with I know not what kind of unlimited Obediences, like Libertines and Vagabonds, or as *S. Thomas* expresses it, like so many *Solitary Devils*? Without doubt they will have a terrible Account to render to God, who are thus careless of their Subjects Souls, and of the honour and reputation of their Communities; exposing them after this manner to the temptations of the Flesh, and of a thousand other Sins. I have known, says *Cantipratenfis*, by woful experience, how true this Sentence of the Wise Man is, *Wo to him that is Alone!* who having these thirty years and more been *Saffragan* in the *Dioceses* of several Provinces, have often heard of horrible scandals, dreadful dangers, and strange misfortunes of Religious Men that have travell'd Alone, or liv'd in Courts without Companions: Which would never have happen'd to them, if they'd had some of their Brethren with them. For as *Seneca* says very wisely, The greatest part of the Sins which men commit, would be avoided, if they had a Witness of their actions. And again, *Solitariness*, says he, is the occasion of a multitude of Evils. Without doubt it is much to your purpose to set a Guard upon yourself, and to have one by you that always beholds you, and is present to your most hidden thoughts. And he adds this Saying of *Epictetus*: Do all thy Actions, as if some Body saw thee.

*Monachus solus incedens, est Daemon solitarius.*

*Lib. 2. Apum cap. 11. par. 1.*

*Ep. 11.*

*Ep. 25.*

Who art thou  
that judgest  
another Man's  
Servant? Rom.

14. 4.

Math. 7. 2.

*Nor judge others.*] Be critical, censorious, forward in giving their verdict, suspicious, rash, uncharitable in making disadvantageous constructions upon the Thoughts, Words, and Actions of their Neighbours. *For in what Judgment you judge, you shall be judgd: And in what Measure you meet it shall be measur'd to you again.* Besides, this critical Observing the faults of others, is frequently the cause of many evils and inconveniencies: It carries along with it breach of charity, pride, indignation against our Neighbour, meanesteem and contempt of our Brethren, remorse of Conscience, indiscreet zeal, and a thousand other imperfections, which agitate and subvert the Heart. Again, it is a kind of Apostacy and Rebellion against Gods Providence, to mount into his Chair to judge Men, and pronounce Sentence without calling him to be President in our Counsel. *S. John Climachus* says, Fire is not more contrary to Water, than Rash-judgment is to the state of Repentance. It is a certain sign, that we do not see our Own sins, when we seek curiously after the least defects of our Neighbour. If we would but once enter into Ourselves, we should be so busy to lament our own Lives, that we should not have time to censure those of others.

Remedies against Rash-  
Judgment.

Rom. 2. 1.

Ecclef. 10. 3.

Now to hinder us from falling into these Inconveniencies, it will be of no small advantage to us, here to consider in the first place, with *S. Paul*, *That you condemn Yourself by the Judgment you pass upon another, for that Judgment is a sign that you yourself are guilty of the same thing, you suspect in him.* According to that of *Ecclesiastes*, *a Fool believes all he meets to be Fools like himself.* And it is a common saying, that a Robber believes all the world Thieves. When one looks upon any thing through a colour'd Glass, all things appear of the same colour of the Glass; so a Wicked man judges all to be like himself; he takes all things

things in the worst part, because he beholds them through a bad *Médium*; and as he has such or such a Prospect in what he do's, and governs himself by such and such a Maxim, so he believes that all others govern themselves by the same motives and considerations. On the contrary, a Vertuous man looks upon all things and explicates them after the best manner; and though sometimes he perceives something to doubt of; yet when he considers it may be taken two ways, he always endeavours to take it in that which is most favourable, *S. Dorothens* says, that as a Man who is of a good Constitution, and has a good Stomach converts even those Meats that are hard of digestion and unwholesom, into good Nourishment; and on the contrary, a bad Stomack turns even the best Meats into choler and bad humours: So he who possesses a good and right Soul, and gives himself to Vertue, interprets all things well; whereas he who knows not what Vertue is, poisons all things, and interprets them in the worst sense. *Dott. 20.*

*S. Thomas* teaches us another Means, which also confirms this. He says, that Rash Judgments often proceed from Envy, Jealousy, or some secret Aversion: For as we easily believe what we desire; so the bad Disposition we are in, in regard of our Brother, is the cause that we find something to blame in all he do's, and interpret all his Actions in the worst sense, if we have but never so little light to perceive them. This will be better conceiv'd by an Example in the contrary: When we have a Passionate Affection for any one, we approve of all his Actions; and are so far from giving them any bad Interpretation, or taking them in ill part, that though we cannot but discover his Faults, yet we presently think how to palliate and diminish them as much as we are able. *Charity*, says *S. Paul*, never admits a thought to his Neighbour's disadvantage. The same Fault, accompany'd *2. 2. 9. 60. art. 3.* *1. Cor. 13. 7.*

Prov. 10. 12.

pany'd with the same circumstances and appearances, seems not to be the same in him we love, as it do's in him we have no kindness for. And daily Experience teaches us, that there are some sort of Persons who displease and hurt us; whilst at the same time there are others, who treat us perhaps worse than they, with whom we are not the least offended, or so much as see or take notice of what they do to us. It is this which the Wise-Man prudently notes, when he says, *Hatred provokes Quarrels, and Charity covers all kind of Defects.*

Stim. amor.  
cap. 10.

The third Cause, from whence rash Judgments commonly arise, is Pride; which though it be the root of all other Sins, yet it is much more particularly of this. And hence S. Bonaventure remarks, that those who think themselves more excellent in Spirituality, are more frequently tempted than others to judge and censure their Neighbours. They imagine themselves to possess the great gifts of God; and instead of being the more Humble thereby, they are puff'd up with a greater Pride, replenish'd with a good Opinion of themselves, look contemptibly upon those, who seem too much employ'd in exterior Occupations; and becoming Criticks and Reformers, they so far forget themselves, that they make it their only business to censure the Lives of others. For which cause the Saints say, that Simplicity is the daughter of Humility; for he who is truly Humble, has not his eyes open to see the faults of his Neighbour, but only to discern his own, and finds so many things to consider and deplore in himself, that he never takes notice or amuses himself in thinking of the faults of others. If therefore we were truly Humble, we should be far from these kind of Judgments.

The Saints add moreover, that though there is no Sin, in judging that an Action is bad, when it is evidently so; yet should that which they see be manifestly Culpable, yet it

is a Vertue and Perfection, to endeavour to excuse our Brother all we can. Excuse the Intention, if you cannot excuse the Action, says *S. Bernard*; believe it proceeds from Ignorance, Surprise, happens by Chance, or is an effect of the first Motion, which he could not help and was not Master of. If we lov'd our Brethren as Ourselves, and look'd upon them as our Second selves, as in effect they really are, we should not want reasons, or industry to excuse them. Self-love always furnishes us with an infinity of excuses; it affords us helps to defend Ourselves, and teaches us how to lessen our own Faults; and without doubt we should make use of the same means in behalf of our Neighbour, if we lov'd him as well as we love Ourselves. But if the Fault should be so Evident and Criminal, that we cannot excuse it; believe then, says this holy Father, and think thus with yourself, That if I had been set upon with the same Temptation, and God had permitted the Devil to have the same power to tempt me, what might not have happen'd to me?

*Serm. 40.  
Sup. Cant.*

O great God! who judgest all Hearts, and dost penetrate the most secret retirements of our Consciences, take from me all Rash Judgment, and give me the grace to look at Home, rather than to pry into the thoughts and actions of Others. Alas! dear Lord, what Spots are in my Soul, and how little do I look into my own Imperfections? Wilt thou never shew me to myself, for some good time, that I may cure myself by the Horrour of seeing what I am, since I do so often wound my own Heart, by judging other Peoples?

*But be Meek and Mild.* ] Sweet, gentle, easy, docile, tractable, and complying; patient in bearing provocations, abuses, reprehensions, contempts; composing their Spirits amidst the greatest trials, and reducing them within the bounds of Christian Moderation, free from Anger, Aversion, Hatred, Revenge &c. In imitation of the Worlds Savour,

*Do thy works  
in Meekness,  
and thou shalt  
be belov'd a-  
bove the glory  
of Men. Eccli.  
3. 19.*



*As a Sheep to slaughter shall he beled, and as a Lamb before his Shearer he shall be Dumb, and shall not open his Mouth.*  
*Isai. 53. 7.*

*Math. 5. 38.*

*Math. 11. 29.*

viour, that meek and gentle Lamb of God; who, when environ'd by his Enemies on all sides, as so many ravenous Wolves ready to devour him, open'd not so much as his Mouth; notwithstanding so many reproachful calumnies, blows, scourges, blasphemies belch'd out against him. All which he bare with incomparable patience, sweetness, lenity and cheerfulness; answerable to that divine Doctrine, which he has deliver'd to us in the Gospel of S. Matthew: *You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, not to resist Evil; but if one strike thee on thy right Cheek, turn to him also the other: And to him that will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy Coat, let go thy Cloak also to him. And whosoever shall force thee one Mile, go with him other twain. He that asks of thee, give to him: And to him that would borrow of thee, turn not away. You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy. But I say to you, Love your Enemies, do Good to them that hate you: And pray for them that persecute and abuse you. In fine, Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am Meek, and Humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your Souls.*

O Meek and Patient Jesus! assist me powerfully with thy grace; that in imitation of thee, I may pardon my Enemies, do Good for evil, vanquish my Passions, repress Anger, embrace Mildness; and arm'd with Patience, may suffer injuries, derisions and contempts with a willing and cheerful heart; that so I may deserve to enjoy an eternal Repose in that blessed Land, which thou hast promis'd for a reward to the Meek.

*Have Peace, and the God of peace and love will be with you. 2. Cor. 13. 11.*

*Peaceable.* ] In bearing with M<sup>n</sup> and Affairs unmov'd; so as to keep their Hearts and Tongues always in a good posture, even and smooth in unexpected, thorny, and cross Accidents. They that understand this Mystery, deserve

deserve to command Men, being here plac'd by Vertue in a degree next the Angels. They are Masters of themselves, Lords of the world, Servants of God, and Heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

But we must take care, that this Peace be so firmly rooted in our Hearts, that it may be always in our power to practise it, without any dependance upon what other Men can say or do to us. There are a sort of People in the world, that outwardly seem to enjoy a profound Peace, so long as nothing thwarts them, and all things happen to their Minds; but upon the least cross Accident that occurs, this Peace vanishes, and they presently take fire, and discover what they are. Such Men as these, says *Albertus Magnus*, have not the vertue of Peace in their own, but in other Mens minds and humours; so that if your Vertue be such as this, it belongs to others and not to you, since it's in their power to give or take it from you, whensoever they please. But your Peace if it be true, must be your own, and not of another's growth, and the Fund ought always to be at your own disposal, without any dependance upon another. Which assure yourself will never be, but by suppressing and rooting out of your Soul your irregular Appetites and vicious Inclinations, which otherwise will break forth upon occasions, disturb the quiet of your Mind, and hinder you from being your own Master. We may make a very just comparison of such Persons as these, to a standing Puddle, which yields no bad smell or vapour, so long as you do not trouble it; but when once you come to stir the Water, it sends forth so intolerable a Stench, as is enough to poison the standers by. Just so it is with these Men; so long as you leave them to themselves, as long as no body vexes them, nor touches their sore Side, they are as gentle as Lambs, they are in a profound Peace, they seem as quiet as a Standing Water that offends no body;

No true Peace to be found but in our own breast by the mastery of our Passions.

Z but

but so soon as they are molested or the least mov'd, presently such pernicious Vapours are rais'd, as give great scandal, and very ill example to their Neighbours. *Touch the Mountains*, says the Psalmist, *and they will Smoak*: Because their Passions take the *Alarum*, and being once stirr'd up, roar like so many unfetter'd Lions.

Wherefore the Mortification of our Passions and irregular Appetites, is the true means to obtain this Peace. And it was upon this account that the Prophet *Isay* said, *that Peace shall be the work of Justice*. *S. Austin* explicates this perfectly well, writing upon those words of the Royal Prophet, *Justice and Peace have kiss'd each other*. Would you, says he; that Justice and Peace should embrace each other? Perform the works of Justice, and you will infallibly have Peace. If you love not Justice, you will never enjoy Peace: For Justice and Peace are Friends so closely link'd together; that if you love not Justice, Peace will not love you, and will never come near you. Peace is not obtain'd but by War; and if you make not War with yourself, by mortifying Self-Love, Pride, Anger, Envy, Hatred, Ambition, Revenge, and other your inordinate Appetites and Desires, you will never obtain this Peace, which is so necessary for your spiritual Advancement. What is a greater hinderance and trouble to you, says *Thomas of Kempis*, than the unmortify'd Affections of your Heart? These irregular Passions and bad Inclinations that you have, are what trouble and hinder you from yielding to Reason. These disquiet you, and cause such a noise and disturbance in your Soul, that the sweet contentment and joy of Peace is continually disturb'd and interrupted thereby.

O my Lord *Jesus*, my most adored Master! come walk upon this tempestuous Sea of my Heart; ascend into this poor Vessel, as thou didst heretofore into that of thy Apostles: Say to me,  
Have.

*Pf. 143. 5.*

*Isa. 32. 17.*

*Pf. 84. 11.*

*Imit. Christ.  
L. I. c. 3.*

*Have confidence, it is I, fear not.* This poor Soul, like a rough and raging Sea, cannot be calm'd but by thy divine Presence. Its Passions by their tumultuous and irregular motions, raise continual Tempests in my Heart, which discompose it, and trouble its desir'd Peace: Sometimes Anger raises a storm; sometimes a blast of Pride and Vain-glory domineers and transports it beyond the bounds of Reason; sometimes Impatience, sometimes Envy do's the like. Wherefore O my sweet Lord and Master! *Command the Winds and the Sea, and there shall ensue a great Calm: Help me so mortify and overcome my Passions and vicious Inclinations, that I may enjoy a perfect Peace in this world, and an eternal Repose in the other.*

*Marc. 6. 50.**Math. 8. 26.*

*Modest* ] In composing all their Gestures, Words, Actions, Habit, Gate, and all that belongs to the outward Ornament of the Body; that nothing may be found therein disagreeable to their Profession: But on the contrary, that their Exterior be so compos'd, all their Senses so recollected, their Behaviour and manner of proceeding so religious and exemplar, as may edify those that live and converse with them, to the increase of Piety, and God's greater Glory.

*Let your Modesty be known to all men.*  
*Philip. 4. 5.*

*S. Hierom* says, that our Face is our Soul's Looking-glass, and that our Eyes, though silent, discover the secrets of our Heart, according to that of *Ecclesiasticks*: *A Man is known by the sight, and a Wise Man is known by the shew of his Face. The clothing of the body, and the laughing of the teeth, and the going of the Man tell of him.* There is so strait an union betwixt Body and Soul, betwixt the Outward and Inward Man, that all that is in the one, appears in the other, by a secret Communication. When the motions of our Mind are compos'd and regular, those of our Body sympathize with them: On the contrary, when these are unquiet and disturb'd, those are also unequal and disorder'd. Hence it is, that a modest composure in the Exterior, is an argument of an Interior Recollection; in the same manner as the Hand of a Watch, is an infallible sign of the

The Interior of a man is known by his Exterior.  
*Eccli. 19. 26.*

Zij exact

exact and regular motion of the Wheels. It is for this reason, that our Neighbour esteems so highly, and is so much edify'd at the Gravity of a Religious person, and his exterior Modesty; since from thence he draws a consequence of the equality and peace of his Mind, and of his proficiency in Vertue: As on the other side, he is as greatly scandaliz'd, if he observe the Exterior not to correspond to a Religious man's Calling; gathering from thence that his Interior is naught likewise.

The fault of one particular Religious enough to disgrace a whole Community.

Small faults in Seculars are great ones in Religious Persons.

Judge then, how much you ought to stand upon your guard, in your Conversation with Men, both for your own credit, and for that of your Order. For Men in the world often judge of All Religious by the actions of One of them; and easily attribute to the whole Body the disorder which they discover in any particular Member; as if his fault were a kind of *Original Sin*, and a defect common to all the rest. Therefore every Religious man is oblig'd to take great care to edify his Neighbour; that by this means not only his own, but likewise the Reputation of the whole Order may be preserv'd and increas'd. For which purpose often call to mind, and seriously reflect with yourself, what Body you are a Member of, into how holy and venerable a Society you are incorporated, of how sublime Perfection, and what a strict Rule you make profession of. The least Specks and Imperfections are great Blots in *S. Francis's* Scutcheon; and those things, which coming from Seculars would seem Trifles, in your behaviour are accounted Sacrileges. You are as the Sun, shining in a bright and serene heaven; against which the shadow of the least Cloud passing, is presently perceiv'd upon the earth. And as the smallest Spot is more undecent in a fine Robe, and the richer the Stuff is, the more the Spot appears; insomuch that what appears very foul upon Cloth of Gold or Silver, can hardly be perceiv'd upon Courser Stuff:

Stuff : So the stain of a Venial Sin, nay many times even that of a Mortal Sin, is scarce taken notice of amongst Secular people, or at least it is look'd upon but as a small oversight ; there being so great and general a Corruption in the World : But in Religious men, who are the Children and Darlings of God, the least imperfection is very considerable ; the least Immodesty, the least Murmuring, the least Impatience or hasty word amongst these, is a very great Offence, and gives great occasion of Scandal amongst us ; but amongst Secular persons, there is so little account made of such things, that oftentimes they never reflect, nor take any notice of them.

It never troubles us to have our Feet dirty, but the least Dust that gets into the apple of our Eye, puts us to very great pain. Men in the world are like the Feet of the mystical Body of the Church, and Religious men resemble the Eyes of the same Body ; so that the least fault in a Religious man, is of very great and bad consequence ; because it works a far worse effect in him, than it can do in a Secular person ; and for this reason a Religious man ly's under a greater obligation of watching, and taking care of all his actions, than others do. Beware therefore what you do, and how you say ought, that may tarnish and offuscate your glory ; and that the People in your manners do not find any thing, wherewith to excuse their own follies and disorders.

Consider besides, that we, who by our *Institute* are bound to Preach, hear Confessions, visit Hospitals, go into Missions, &c. are much more oblig'd than others, to an exact observance of Modesty and religious Behaviour : It being not to be doubted, but that from an humble, modest and mortify'd Exterior, these Functions make deeper impression, and are render'd more efficacious in order to the Salvation of Souls. It is by this means, our Preachers gain credit from their Auditors, who thereupon forming a great opinion of their Sanctity,

Modesty and  
exemplar be-  
haviour  
chiefly re-  
quir'd in  
Preachers,  
Confessors  
&c.

Sanctity, receive their words as Oracles coming from heaven, and engrave them on their Hearts : For good Example preaches much more forcibly, than all the Eloquence that words can express. It is recounted of *S. Francis*, that one Day calling one of his Religious, he said to him, Come let us go out to Preach ; whereupon they went abroad, and having taken a turn in the City, return'd home ; being return'd, his Companion ask'd him when he would make the Sermon he promis'd, it's done already reply'd the Saint ; insinuating thereby, that the religious Modesty with which they had appear'd in the Town, had been an admirable Sermon to all that saw them. And indeed an humble and mortify'd Exterior excites in men Devotion ; it causes Compunction and Sorrow in them for their Sins, raises their thoughts and hearts to Heaven. In a word, this silent Preaching oftener works more upon their minds, than the most learned and sublime Discourses from a Pulpit would be able to do. All this must needs encourage us extremely to an observance of Modesty, in order to edify our Neighbours, and to produce in them the fruit and sweet odour of good works : Otherwise what is become of the zeal of God's Glory which Religious men profess ? Where is our care to save Souls, if we do not endeavour this one thing so proper for it ?

How much  
the Modesty  
and Example  
of a good Re-  
ligious edi-  
fy's a Com-  
munity.

Moreover this kind of Modesty we speak of, do's not only serve for the edification of Persons in the world, but also of our Brethren in religion. For as Secular people when they see a Religious man in the Church very devout and recollected, or modestly walking the Streets in silence, without taking notice of what happens round about him, conceive a great Esteem of him, and feel themselves mov'd to Devotion : So in a Religious House, those that are modest and recollected give extraordinary edification to the whole Community. Their looks, says *S. Hierom*, is an exhortation of Silence

Silence to those that break it; their very presence is a lesson of Modesty and Recollection to all those, whose words and actions are any ways Irregular. Lastly, these Persons keep up Religious Houses, by maintaining their Esteem abroad, and supporting Vertue and Regular Observance at home; because their Example draws others to Devotion, and creates in them a love of Celestial things.

O Heavenly Father, the liberal Bestower of all lovely Qualities! Give me, I humbly beseech thee, these external Graces becoming my condition and the calling of a Religious Man: That so my inward and outward Composure, my Soul and Body, my Senses, and all that I am, making up a perfect *Harmony* of all holy Vertues; I may become pleasing to thy Divine Majesty, edifying to my Neighbour, and instrumental to my own Salvation.

*Humble.] For I say unto you, except you be converted, and become as little Children; you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. S. Cyprian* says, that Humility is the Basis and Foundation of Sanctity; *S. Hierom*, that it is the first Christian virtue; *S. Bernard*, that it is the Preserver of Vertues; and *S. Gregory* calls it, sometimes the Mistress and Mother, and sometimes the Spring and Root of all other Vertues. For as a Flower draws all its freshness and beauty from the Root, and quickly fades as soon as it is gather'd: So, if any Vertue whatsoever be but separated from the root of Humility, it withers presently and loses its force. Again, as the Root lies deep under ground, and is trodden under foot, and has ordinarily neither beauty nor smell; yet nevertheless is the *Principle* both of the Plant's life and nourishment: So Humility is the cause, that he who is humble, loves to lye hid, as it were under ground, to be trod upon and despis'd; shuns noise and splendor, and seeks only the obscurity of Retirement. Nevertheless it is this, which in itself preserves and gives continual growth to

*Math. 18. 3:*  
The Praises  
of Humility.



to all other Vertues, namely to *Patience, Modesty, Silence, Clemency, Faith, Hope, Charity, Poverty, Chastity, Obedience*, and the rest. So that we must conclude with the Holy Fathers above, that the source, foundation and root of all vertues is Humility: *As Pride is the beginning and origine of all sins.*

*Eccij. 10. 15.*

Our Saviour  
the prime  
Model of the  
Vertue of  
Humility.

Moreover, this Vertue is so admirable and divine, and so necessary for man's Salvation, that the Son of God descended from Heaven to teach it us, not only by Words, but more especially by his Actions; of which his whole Life was nothing else but a long Example, and living Model; as you will clearly see, if you run over and examine the chief Circumstances thereof, from his Birth to his Death. From his first Entrance into the world he consecrates this Vertue; he is no sooner born, but put into Rags, laid in a Manger, expos'd to the rigor of the most cruel Season of the whole Year, destitute of all humane Succour and Attendance; presently after he is Circumcis'd, as a Sinner; then flies into *Egypt*, as too weak and unable to resist: He is Baptis'd with Sinners and Publicans, as one of them; he condescends to wash his Disciples feet; when the People would honour and make him King, he hides himself; when they would clothe him with reproaches, he shews himself: Men praise him, and even the Devils themselves do so too by the mouths of the Possess'd, and he commands them Silence: They load him with Affronts and Injuries, and he answers not a word: He is put in competition with *Barabbas*, and judg'd more wicked and unworthy to live than he: He is buffeted as a Slave; spit upon as a Blasphemer; cloth'd in white as a Fool, and with Purple as a Mock-king; scourg'd as a publick Highway man. After all this, to recommend Humility to us, as it were by his last Will and Testament, he crowns so many Examples by the most ignominious and shamefull death of the Cross, breathing out his last betwixt two Thieves.

O wholesome Doctrine, O Master and Lord of men! cry'st *L. de Sanct.*  
 out *S. Austin* hereupon, who hast swallow'd Death in a *Virg. c. 52.*  
 Cup full of the poison of Pride, what wouldest thou have  
 us learn of thee? *That I am Meek and Humble of heart.*  
 What! are all the Treasures of the wisdom and knowledge  
 which are lodg'd in thee, reduc'd to this; to teach us, *that*  
*thou art Meek and Humble of heart?* Is it so great a thing  
 to be Little, that no Body can teach it us, except thou  
 who art so Great? Behold the reason then, why so great  
 a Majesty stoops so low; 'tis to teach us to be Humble; *It is,* *Pf. 9. 39.*  
*that none should henceforth presume to magnify themselves*  
*upon earth.* Man has from the beginning been so extravagant  
 as to let himself be carry'd away by Vanity; but now, says  
*S. Bernard*, it would be an insufferable impudence for a  
 Worm to swell with Pride, when the Majesty of the Eternal  
 God has humbl'd and made himself as Nothing. The Son of  
 God, Equal to his Father, takes the form of a Servant, he  
 will be humbl'd and despis'd; and I, who am but Dust and  
 Ashes, seek to be honour'd and respected. God forbid. Where-  
 fore, my dearest Brethren, let us get this Lesson at our fingers  
 ends which our divine Master teaches us. Let us learn to be  
 Humble; Humble, I say, not in Words, but in Deeds; let  
 us shew ourselves to be such by the practice of the following  
 Points, wherein the Exercise of this vertue principally consists.

First, in having a mean Opinion of ourselves, looking  
 upon ourselves as Nothing and as the worst of men, and in  
 being glad that others should have the same, and that they  
 undervalue and contemn us as we truly deserve. Be Little in  
 thine own eyes, says *S. Isidore*, that thou mayst be Great  
 in the eyes of God. So much the more Precious thou wilt  
 be in his; by how much the more Base and Vile thou art  
 in thine own. 2. In placing all our Confidence in God, belie-  
 ving that of ourselves, we share in nothing but in sin and

The practice  
 of Humility  
 wherein it  
 consists.

*Isid. in*  
*Synonym.*

A a misery;

misery ; and that whatever good we have or do , we neither have it nor do it of ourselves , but hold it all from the Divine Bounty . 3. In making always choice of the very worst things in what belongs to Meat , Drink , Clothes , Lodging , Employments , &c. 4. In speaking little of ourselves , and of all that belongs to us ; in flying humane applause ; hearkning willingly to the advice of others ; bravely despising all worldly things ; acknowledging and freely confessing our faults ; conversing willingly with poor and abject persons ; submitting to obedience , yielding to reason , not presuming upon our own strength , nor preferring ourselves before others , but in all companies and occasions ever choosing the lowest place . For he that ly's upon the Ground can fall no lower , but may contemplate all above him , and meditate how to raise himself by the hand of God , which pulls down the Proud , and exalts the Humble . How much the more we lessen ourselves , so much the nearer we approach to the Sun of Glory . The Stars are beheld in the bottom of a Pit , and profound Humility makes the most radiant splendors appear in greatness ,

Pf. 38. 6.

O God ! *All that I am is as Nothing before thee.* It is thou , O Lord , who hast given me my Being , and all my Faculties both of Body and Soul , and it is of thee that I hold them ; and what reason have I to glory therein , since I contributed nothing thereto . And it is thou alone that preserv'st them , and giv'st me the power to act ; it is thy almighty Arm that continually holds me up , that hinders me from falling back into the *Nothing* from whence I came . I do so depend on thy Help , O my God ! and my Preservation is so much link'd thereto , that if thou shouldst fail me , and withdraw thy Hand but one moment , I should also fail in that very instant ; I should cease to be , and should return into my first *Nothing* . It is likewise thy Grace , which draws me out of my Sins ; and it is that which hinders me from relapsing into them ; If I have risen again , it is because thou hast reach'd out thy hand to me ;  
and

and if I now stand, it is because thou upholdest me. Our Being, Breath and Action, both in *Grace* and *Nature*, all come from thy Bounty; as for us, we can do Nothing, because we are Nothing of ourselves. What then, O my Soul, can we be proud of? Let us walk therefore in the way of Humility, following the foot-steps of our Lord and Master; that so humbling ourselves with him here on Earth, we may deserve to be exalted with him in Heaven.

*Speaking bashfully.* ] Mildly, sweetly, gently, courteously, respectfully. *To every Body.* ] Framing and adapting their discourse and manner of speech, according to the different degrees, ranks, conditions, offices, employments, affections, humours, inclinations, capacities, and other circumstances of the Persons to whom they speak; whether Superiours or Inferiours, Domesticks or Strangers, Ecclesiasticks or Seculars, Rich or Poor, Ignorant or Learned, Friends or Foes: So to all Men becoming all things, that they may save all. As it becomes. ] Religious Men, and those that make profession of living up to the rules of the Gospel: That their Words be such, and so fitly plac'd, and tim'd, that they give no occasion of Offence or Scandal; but on the contrary, subject of Contentment and Edification to all the world; which they will be sure to do, if their Discourse be accompany'd with the following Conditions.

1. To consider before we speak, What it is we are about to say. *S. Hierom* compares a Word when once utter'd, to a Stone cast out of a man's Hand, which he having once thrown, it is not in his power to hinder it from performing all the Mischiefe it is capable of doing; and therefore advises us to be very wary, and seriously to examine our Words before we let them go; because afterwards it will be too late to do so. This lesson is taught us by Nature itself, who has so order'd that our Ears should be always open, and ready to receive every Sound; but has wisely plac'd our Lips and

Aa ij      Teeth

*Let your Talk  
always in grace  
be season'd  
with Salt; that  
you may know  
how you ought  
to answer every  
Man. Coloss.  
4. 6.*

*L. Cor. 9. 19.*

1. Condition  
requir'd to  
speak Reli-  
giously.

Jac. 1. 19.

The great  
advantages  
of Silence..

Prov- 21. 23.

Teeth as a double *barrier*, for the defence of our Tongue : Thereby teaching us, to be forward and ready in Hearing, but very moderate and reserv'd in Speaking, according to what *S. James* prescribes, *Let every one be quick to Hear, but slow to Speak*. The famous *S. Nazianzen* advises us in our Conversation with men, to set a Compass on our Lips, to measure and square out all our words with discretion. So many Secrets unnecessarily discover'd, so many infamous Slanders, so many inconsiderate Tales, so many frivolous Promises, such impudent Lyes, Oaths, Blasphemies, so many Disasters which oft happen for a slight Speech, daily teach us, that words have no Handles to hold them by, and better it is to trip with the Foot, than the Tongue. In fine, this Mystery of speaking being so hard to learn, and so much consideration requir'd to reduce it to practice, we cannot do better, when we are not under an absolute necessity of conversing with the world, than to put ourselves under the covert and shelter of Silence, which will protect us from all the inconveniencies and dangers, to which our Words daily expose us. *He who is careful and cautious in his words, frees his Soul from many afflictions*, says the Wise-Man. And an ancient Father assures us, that wheresoever we live, if we keep Silence and are sparing of our words, we shall live in Peace. *Seneca* also says to his Friend in one of his Epistles, That there is nothing more profitable than Retirement, and to converse little with Others, but much with Himself. All likewise applaud that frequent saying of *Arsenius* ; I have often repented to have spoken, but never to have held my peace. Keep Silence well, and I'll ingage for the reformation of all other Irregularities. But if this be neglected, there's nothing heard but Complaints, idle Stories, Murmurings, Detractions, and particular Disgusts ; which are not only introduc'd, but fomented by too great liberty of Conversation.

It

§. XV. *Their Behaviour Abroad.* 189

It is hereby, that one Man makes many others lose their Time and one Inconvenience draws on another, till at length all Regular Observance decays, and the whole House in a very short time, loses the name of being Religious, and becomes both Secular and Prophane. On the contrary, where Silence is observ'd, it consecrates the House to God, causes all to breath an air of Sanctity, and fills it with an odour of Vertue and Recollection; which excites all Strangers to Piety, and makes them cry out: *God is truly here, this is the House of God, and Gate of Heaven.*

*Gen. 28. 16.*

2. That our Discourse be always of a pious and godly Subject; thereby to edify the world, and advance the glory of God, and the salvation of our Neighbour; which to perform with better success Abroad, it will conduce very much to accustom ourselves to talk Spiritually at Home; to the end, that being well vers'd in such divine Language, we may make use of it when we meet with People of the world.

2. Condition requir'd to speak Religiously.

*S. Bernard* in his time gave a very severe Check to some of his Religious, who were not observant of this Custom, and objecting to them the practice of the Primitive Christians, cry's out: How much difference is there betwixt us and those holy Men, who liv'd in *S. Antony's* days? They no sooner met, but they began to speak of God; the desire they had to feed their Souls, made them even forget for several days to give any food to their Bodies. And in this they observ'd a due Order; for the Nobler Part ought to be serv'd in the first place. *But our Meeting together*, to use the Apostl's words, is not to eat the *Lords Supper*; because no body asks after this Bread of Life, and no body also thinks of giving it. Not a word of the Holy Scripture is heard amongst us, nor any Discourse tending to the salvation of our Souls; but all our Talk is fill'd with jests and laughter, and with vain, idle and scurrilous words. Had we the Love of God in

*Apolog. ad Guil. Abbat.*

our

*Eccli. 38. 26.*

*Opusc. Tom. 1.  
Admonit. c. 20.*

our Hearts, we should not fail to have him likewise in our Mouths; and we should never be weary of talking Spiritually, nor think it tedious to hear others do so. For how can that be painful to us, which we love? Do we not observe how solicitous a Marchant is about his Affairs, how feelingly he talks of them at all times, and in all places; and with what satisfaction he hears others speak of Buying and Selling, and of all kind of Traffick? *He that drives the Plough, and holds the Plough-Staff in his hand, says Ecclesiasticks, talks of nothing but his Oxen and their labour, and all his thoughts are employ'd about Tilling the ground.* In fine, every Body delights to speak of his own Profession. Perfection and Vertue is what we profess, for this we left the World; and if we either love God or the Profession we have embrac'd, it is certain we shall find very great satisfaction in Spirituall Discourses, and never want Matter to supply them. "Blessed is that Religious Man, says our Holy Father, who has no joy nor satisfaction but in pious entertainments and discourses of God; thereby to induce and allure Men with pleasantness and mirth to the love of their Creator. But Woe be to that Religious, who is pleas'd with idle and foolish words, and makes it his pastime to excite Men to vain laughter. Happy the Tongue, says *S. Hieram*, that knows no other language but that of Saints. Do not give Ear to vain and insignificant discourses, says *S. Basil*; but if any thing is brought out of Scripture, or concerns your Soul's Welfare, listen to it, and dwell upon it. Let the very Mention of things of the World be bitter to you; but think it a Comfort to hear discourses of Piety and Devotion. It is a good sign when we love to speak of God but a very bad one when we do not. To Conclude, there is nothing edifies our Neighbour more than to entertain him with pious Discourses; for besides the advantages that these Spiritual Conversations carry along with them, it is certain that

that Worldly persons perceiving that a Religious man never gives them any other Entertainment than this, they conceive a high Esteem of him, and have a particular Veneration for him, believing such a one to be replenish'd with God, who can speak of nothing else but of him; according to what is written: *The good Man of the good Treasure of his Heart brings forth good: And the evil Man of the ill Treasure brings forth evil. For of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaks.* Luc. 6. 45.

3. To Consider the Person spoke to, and the Company in whose presence we speak. This instructs Young people, how they ought to behave themselves before Aged persons; and such as are not in Orders, how they should carry themselves before Priests, according to that of *Ecclesiasticus*: *Do not speak much in the presence of Priests and Elders.* And again: *Young man, speak in thine own Cause scarcely. If thou be ask'd twice, let thine Head have an answer. In many things be as it were ignorant, and bear holding thy peace, and withall asking. In the midst of Great Men presume not; and where Ancients are, speak not much,* Youth, says, *S. Bernard*, shews its submission, deference, and veneration to Old Age by *Silence*; that being the greatest testimony of the honour and respect they pay them. *S. Bonaventure* renders this still clearer by the following comparison; As the Fear of God, says he, makes us appear with modesty and respect in his presence, and brings us into favour with him; after the same manner, venerable Old Age commands duty and veneration from us, and even obliges us to a respectful Silence, and modest Behaviour in their presence.

4. The proper Time of speaking: This circumstance is recommended to us by *S. Ambrose*, as the chief part of Prudence. *The Wise Man*, says *Ecclesiasticus*, *will not speak but in due Time, but the impudent and imprudent, observe no order or method in their words.* To make us the more observant 4. Condition.  
Eccli. 20. 7.



- observant of this circumstance, the Holy Scripture gives this high commendation of those that use it. *A word in Season is like a Golden Apple, upon a Bed of Silver.* Where this Caution is not us'd, Confusion follows, and the best things lose their value, and become disagreeable; for according to the
- Prov. 25. 11.* Wise-Man. *A Parable never comes well, or has any force out of the mouth of a Fool; because he pronounces it not in due Season.* This circumstance extends itself yet farther, and advises us never to interrupt another's Discourse; it being against the rules of common Civility. *Interrupt not another whilst he is speaking,* says *Ecclesiasticus*; having patience till he has done, and then speak in your turn. And the Wise Man gives us still another Instruction, when he says, *He that answers before he understands what is said to him, shews himself a Fool, and deserves to be confounded,* He answers to he knows not what, and therefore meets with a confusion answerable to his folly. He imagines them to say what they never dream'd of, which makes his answer impertinent; and though he design'd to shew his quickness of Apprehension, yet instead thereof he discovers his own Extravagance. *S. Basil* gives us very good counsel upon this point, and advises us to be Silent when a Question is ask'd another; nay, suppose that we be engag'd in Company, and some one starts a Question to all in general, we must never take it as address'd to us in particular, nor presume to be the first in answering. Humility forbids so great an Arrogancy, as to look upon yourself as the best Man in the Company. It is better to be silent till your Opinion be ask'd in particular, and then offer what prudence shall suggest; otherwise, *Hear holding thy peace, and for thy reverence good grace shall come to thee.*
- Eccli. 32. 9.*
3. Condition. 5. The Tone or manner of speaking: This advises us upon all occasions to speak softly and with a low voice, and to observe a *Decorum* in our words, that we may appear true

true Religious. *S. Bonaventure* esteems it a great fault for a Religious Man to speak loud, and would have us speak so, as to make those only hear us, who are close by us. If any thing presses you to speak to one that is a pretty way off, go to him, it being an injury to Modesty, to speak at a distance, or to call out aloud. The same Saint bids us also speak more softly than ordinary when it is Night, or when we are retir'd to go to Rest, for fear of disturbing others. Which Caution is also to be us'd in the *Sacristy, Refectory, Chapter-house*, and other places of Silence and Respect. As to our Voice or Tone, *S. Ambrose* would have it even, and of an equal and constant strain; without any languishing stops or interruptions, free from all kind of affectation and effeminacy, but grave and masculine as becomes a Man; yet at the same time so govern'd, as neither to appear harsh nor rude. And *S. Bernard* is of the same opinion, when he says, that as a whining or effeminate Voice and Gestures are not to be us'd, so such as are clownish and unmannerly are equally to be avoided. An ingaging Behaviour, and a pleasant and serene Countenance are also reduc'd to this circumstance. We must not put on an austere and grim Look; wry Mouths, rolling and staring Eyes, and the contraction of our Nose and Eyebrows must be avoided; we must not shake our Head, nor use any other light or mis-becoming Gesture. A Religious Man ought both in words and actions, to aim at a happy composition of Humility, Gravity and Sweetness; be affable, courteous, obliging to every body; abstain from all kind of levity, jesting, and idle talk. Do not trifle away your Time, says *S. Basil*, in childish Jest, very mis-becoming one that aspires to Perfection. Never disgrace yourself, you who are a Religious Man, so far, as to act the Buffoon. A Person that jests and turns things into *Ridicule*, must needs be negligent and very loose in the service of God; since all Devotion

B b

*Spec. Disc.*  
p. 4. c. 5.

*Offic. l. i. c. 19.*

*de Ord. vite  
& morum In-  
stit.*

*Const. Monast.*  
Cap. 13.

Jesting and  
Rallery ill-  
becoming  
Religious  
Persons.

*De Confid.  
lib. 2.*

tion and Compunction of heart is thereby destroy'd. *S. Bernard* urges this point home, and says very well, that Jestings or Rallery in a Secular man's mouth passes for what it is, but in the mouth of a Priest it is a kind of Blasphemy. His Mouth is consecrated, and ought to speak what is Holy. In him it is a Crime to utter a Jest, but to accustom himself to it, is a Sacrilege. Behold in short the principal Rules, which our Holy Founder desires we should observe in Conversation, when he says in the Text, *Speaking handsomely to every body as it becomes.*

O word Incarnate, to whom all just Tongues speak, and after whom all Hearts do thirst and languish! thou who makest the Tongues of Infants eloquent, loosen my Tongue, and pour forth the grace of thy Spirit upon my Lips; impart to me the gift of Tongues, as thou didst heretofore to thy Apostles and Faithful Servants; that so I may speak to every one as it becomes me, to thy greater Glory, the edification of my Neighbour, and the good of my own Soul.

*Jesus wearied  
of his Journey,  
sate upon the  
Fountain. Jo.  
4. 6.*

§. XVI. *And they ought not to Ride on Horse-back* ] It being very unbecoming, yea ridiculous, for those that are clad in poor and coarse Garments, patch'd and piec'd with Sack-Cloth; without Money, Linnen, Stockings and Shooes, and are to beg from door to door, to go like great Persons on *Horse-back*, or in *Coaches*, *Litters*, *Chariots*, and other Pompous conveniencies for Travelling; proper only to the Rich. It is lawful nevertheless without prejudice to our Rule, to go in Boats drawn by Horses, or to ride upon *Asses*; and also in Wagons or Carts, provided it be not otherwise forbidden by our *Constitutions*; and that there be no danger of Scandal, nor immoderate Excess against the humility, poverty and austerity of our Calling; nor no superfluous and unnecessary Recourse to friends for Money to pay our hire; and lastly, that there be some plausible and religious Motive for

§. XVII.

*That they ought not to Ride.*

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for so doing. Otherwise it were more edifying, and suitable to our Poverty, and the Mortify'd life of such as make profession of the Gospel, to walk on Foot, whilst Secular Men take their conveniency's on the Road, *These in Chariots, and shafe on Horses; but we in Name of God;* accompanying our blessed Redeemer, and his holy Apostles in their laborious and tiresome Journeys on Foot. *Ps. 19, 2.*

§. XVII. *Unless forc'd by a manifest Necessity, or Infir- mity.* ] As for *Necessity*, it may arise either from the Length of the way, if it cannot be gone on Foot without some great inconvenience, or manifest danger of prejudicing our Health: Or from the Difficulty of passing the ways by reason of high Waters, Snows &c. Or lastly, from the exigency of Affairs, which require hast, and cannot be dispatch'd on Foot in so short a time, without some considerable incommodity or uncertainty. However there must always be suppos'd some lawful Cause, which must induce this manifest Necessity; for example, the good of Religion, or of the Commonwealth, or of some particular Person. Otherwise if a Journey be undertaken for Pleasure, or for some other unnecessary Occasion, if they know before hand that it cannot be compass'd without Riding, without doubt they transgress this Precept by so doing. As for *Infirmary*, then it may be said to excuse from violating this Precept; when an infirm Brother is sent by Obedience to change his Convent; or to take the Air for recovery of his Health. It is also a sufficient excuse to Ride, if otherwise without prejudice of Health or religious Civility, one cannot accompany his Brother that has need to Ride. *Against such there is no Law. Gal. 5. 23.*

O my sweet Master, the most exact Model of all vertue and perfection! I render thee most humble thanks, for the rare Example thou hast given me of Austerity, Modesty, and Humility; who, being always able to walk upon the wings of cherubims,

Bb ij

wouldst

would'st creep amongst us, like a little worm of the Earth; still travelling on Foot, and never in all thy painful Journeys undertaken for us, making use of any Beast of carriage for thy assistance, but to accomplish some Mystery; as in thy triumphant Entry into the City of Jerusalem before thy Passion. O, who will give me leave to imitate thee! I am most unworthy, dear Lord, of thy sweet Company; but I will follow thee at a distance with Ashes on my head, and Sack - Cloth on my back, Bare-foot, and Bare-head; thus passing on my way to that blessed Eternity, which thou hast purchas'd for me by thy most painful and dolorous Foot-steps.

XVIII. *Into what ever House they shall enter, first let them say, Peace be to this House.*] Using that Evangelical Creting, which in *S. Mathew* is express'd in this manner: *And when ye enter into the House, salute it, saying, Peace be to this House. And if so be that House be worthy, your Peace shall come upon it: But if it be not worthy, your Peace shall return to you.* As *Christ* himself us'd these words, or this Blessing often, *Peace be to you*; so he bids his Apostles say the like to the House where they come; and in imitation of them, our Holy Founder recommends the same to us. And so has it been always a pious and godly Practice for Bishops to give their Blessing where they come; which must needs be of great profit, when none but Worthy persons (as we here see) might partake thereof; and when it is never lost, but returns to the Giver, when the other Party is not worthy of it. Among other spiritual Benefits it takes away Venial Sins, says *Am.* in *9. Luc.*

Let our Brethren then never fail, at their first Entrance into any House, to salute it, saying, *Peace be to this House.* Peace between Man and Wife: Peace between Parents and Children: Peace between Masters and Servants: Peace with God, Peace with Themselves, and Peace with their Neighbours: Peace in thoughts, Peace in words, Peace in actions:  
Peace

*Math. 10. 12.*

*How beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of him that brings good Tidings, that publishes Peace! Isai. 52. 7.*

*A Friars Salutation how beneficial to those unto whom it is imparted.*

Peace in prosperity, Peace in adversity : Peace in plenty, Peace in want : Peace in sickness, Peace in health : Peace in life, Peace in death : Peace in this world, Peace in the next. And this Peace they are to procure, as well as wish to their Hosts, when it is in their power. In imitation of him that brought an Universal Peace into the world, *Christ Jesus*, the Father of all blessed Harmonies ; who, upon the day of his Passion made on the Cross a general Peace in all Nature, pacifying and reconciling by the plentiful effusion of his Blood, all that is upon Earth, and all that is in Heaven. He pacify'd *Limbo*, taking the Holy Fathers out of Darkness, to enjoy an eternal Light. He pacify'd the Earth, making it from thenceforth to breath an air of his Mercies. He pacify'd his Apostles, by delivering them from that profound Sadness, which they conceiv'd by the imaginary Loss of their dear Master. He pacify'd *Herod* and *Pilate*, who before being Enemies, became Friends on the day of his Passion. In fine, he pacify'd Heaven, by sweetning the sharpness of his Heavenly Father, quenching by his wounds, the Fire which was kindl'd of his just Anger.

*Blessed are the Peace-makers; for they shall be call'd the Children of God. Math. 5. 9.*

Great Peace-maker of the world ! grant, we humbly beseech thee, to these thy Servants, our Benefactors, into whose Houses we enter, the same Holy Peace that thou gav'st to thy Apostles, when thou saidst, *Peace be to you*. Give them Peace in Themselves, by an absolute subjection of Sensitive Nature to the Intellectual, and of Passion to Reason. Give them Peace with the Good, by Conformity of their conversation with them. Give them Peace with the Wicked, by returning good for evil, and bearing patiently the injuries these inflict upon them. And give them Peace with Thee, by an intire submission of all their Hopes and Desires to thy heavenly Decrees.

§. XIX. *And according to the Holy Gospel, it shall be lawful for them, to eat of all Meats that are set before them. ] For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be*

*Luc. 10. 7.*

*1. Tim. 4. 4.*

be rejected that is receiv'd with thanks-giving; for it is sanctify'd by the word of God, and Prayer. Which is to be understood, within the bounds of Moderation and Temperance, and supposing such Meats are not forbid by the Church upon certain days, nor by their Rule, nor by any Statute of the Order: So accommodating themselves to their Hosts in all that is lawful, to render themselves thereby more familiar and agreeable, and less burdensome to them. I say, *Within the bounds of Moderation and Temperance*; for it is very ill-becoming Religious men, who make profession of Poverty, Austerity and Mortification, either to exceed in the quantity of Viands, or to be curious in the choice of Delicate Meats, to hunt after Rich mens Tables, to have their minds perpetually employ'd on Sawces and Kitchin-Receipts, to enlarge their thoughts upon Viands with a greediness and profusion of spirit, to out-run the hours of Repast through impatience, and the like. All which extreemly vilify Ecclesiasticks. It much better becomes us to say with our Holy Founder. „ I will not feed upon delicate and plentiful Dishes, but be „ content with few, and ordinary ones. And in all things that „ belong to the necessities of Life, those only I love and take „ delight in, which relish of Holy Poverty. And the same sentiments the *Seraphical* Doctor had, which he has express'd in writing to a certain Provincial of the Order: It is, says he, an abominable and prophane Ly, to make profession of the strictest Poverty, and yet to be unwilling to suffer the least Want. At home to abound with plenty of all things; and abroad, like poor Beggars, to ask Almes from door to door. If we will edify our Hosts, and make ourselves well-come and acceptable to them, we must be content with Little, and receive kindly what is kindly offer'd, though never so mean, or coarsely dress'd. The Wise Hebrews have a Proverb, which says: A Man is known by three

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Colloq. 9.*

Temperance  
and Sobriety  
recommen-  
ded to us at  
the Tables of  
Seculars.

three things, by Anger, by his Purse, by his Gluts. It is a Note of a well mortify'd Spirit, when complaints are never made of wants that happen in services for the Mouth. Wherefore at whatsoever Table you are, let the advice of the Wise Man please you, which says: *Use as a Frugal man those things that are set before thee; lest thou be hated when thou eatest much. Leave off first, for Manners sake, and exceed not, lest thou perhaps offend. And if thou be set in the midst of Many, stretch not out thy Hand before them: Neither do thou first ask to drink. How sufficient is a little Wine for a Man well taught, and in sleeping thou shalt not be pain'd with it, and thou shalt feel no grief.* And again in another place he counsels us thus: *Go not after thy Concupiscences, and turn away from thy Will. If thou give to thy Soul her Concupiscences, she will make thee a joy to thine Enemies.* Wherefore let us endeavour to observe in all things a holy Austerity; which ought to be so much the stricter, by how much the more sublime the Poverty is, whereof we make profession; remembering ourselves, that we came to the Religion of *S. Francis*, not as to the School of *Epicurus*, to seek all the petty accommodations and services of the Flesh, to content Nature, and place therein our Felicity; but as to the School of *Christ*, to mortify the Body that the Spirit may live: Holding for undoubted that Maxime of *S. Paul*, *If you live according to the Flesh, you shall Dye; but if by the Spirit, you mortify the deeds of the Flesh, you shall Live.* There are a thousand fantastical Inventions in a Spirit over much ty'd to its Body, and perpetually hunting after Dainties to please the Taste, thinking therein to find its contentment; but Experience sufficiently convinces us it never will, but by flight from Carnal Pleasures and unlawfull Lusts, and by application of our Spirit to things Divine.

Ecli. 31. 19.

Ecli. 18. 30.

Rom. 8. 13.



O sweet *Jesus* ! who fed'st thy People in the Desert with Bread from Heaven, and sustain'dst thy Self and thy beloved Disciples with bread of Barley, without affording them any Delicacies: Grant that I may be content with common Fare, and not be curious and nice in my Meat and Drink, nor desirous of sumptuous and delicate Dishes; but ever treat my Body with the same Austerity, wherewith for my example thou treatedst thine.



That the Brethren Receive no Mony.

## CHAP. IV.

*I strictly command all the Brethren, that by no means they receive any Coin or Mony, either by Themselves, or by an Interpos'd Person. Notwithstanding, for the Necessities of the Sick, and Clothing of the other Brethren, let the Ministers and Custodes Only have a diligent Care, by Spiritual Friends, according to Places, Times and cold Regions, as they shall see expedient for Necessity. Always this excepted, that, as is said, they receive no Coin or Mony.*

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THE

## THE EXPOSITION.

**S. I.** ] Brother Francis, who have ever esteem'd Mony, as the Source of all the mischiefs in the world, the Plague of humane life, and more dangerous than any venomous Serpent; as the Devil's Instrument, the Stone of scandal, and Idol of abomination: Playing the Tyrant every where throughout the world, and subjecting Mankind to a miserable Servitude: Robbing them of their ease, peace and tranquillity of Mind: Filling them with fears, suspicions, jealousies, anxieties, and gnawing cares: Exposing them to a thousand perils, hardships, miseries, and temptations: Inciting them to murders, thefts, rapines, usuries oppressions, lyes, false oaths, hatred, envy, anger, rebellion, sacrilege, ingratitude, ambition, treachery, revenge, and all that is horrid in Nature: Depriving them of the sweet and assured repose of the providential care of the Heavenly Father, who covers all things under his royal Mantle: Plunging them into all manner of filth and mire, of drunkenness, surfeits, pollutions, fornications, adulteries, and all the sins of carnal Concupiscence, into whose snares the Rich are commonly they that fall. And lastly, overwhelming and burying them in a perpetual forgetfulness of their Salvation, and neglect of all Spiritual things, and of the Life to come.

This was it, which made the Saviour of the world to say: *That it is easier for a Camel to pass through the eye of a Needle, than for a Rich Man to enter into the kingdom of God.* And the Holy Ghost by the Mouth of Ecclesiasticks: *He that loves Gold, shall not be justifi'd; and he that follows after Corruption, shall be replenish'd with it. Many have been given into falls for Gold, and their Perdition has come from the Beauty thereof. The Gold of them*

The many and great Disorders caus'd in the world by Mony.

Marc. 10. 25.

Eccle. 31. 7.

C c

that

1. Tim. 6. 9.

that Sacrifice is a wood of Offence : Wo to them who follow after it, and every unwise Man shall perish in it. And S. Paul : They that will be made Rich, fall into Temptation, and the snare of the Devil, and many Desires unprofitable and hurtful, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the Root of all Evil is the Love of Mony ; which while some coveted after, they have er'd from the Faith, and have entangl'd themselves in many Sorrows. And to conclude with the Holy Fathers, who say : That Riches are deceitful Shadows, which cover an apparent Good under an undoubted Evil : Are Hands, that take their Master by the throat : Are Ponyards with a golden haft, which delight the Eyes with vain seemings, and pierce the Heart with mortal wounds : Are deadly Poisons, steep'd in a golden Cup : Are Precipices, furnish'd with precious Jewells : Are Heights, which are not measur'd but by their Falls. For these Reasons,

The Precept of not receiving Mony explain'd.  
*Nothing is more wicked than to love Mony. Eccli. 10. 10.*  
*Gold and Silver have destroy'd many, and have reach'd even to the Heart of Kings, and have turn'd them. Eccli. 8. 3.*  
*How hardly shall they that*

S. II. *Strictly command all the Brethren.* ] As well Superiours as Subjects. *That by no Means.* ] By no manner of ways ; either in Dominion, Propriety, Possession, Civil Use, Disposal, or Administration ; either in Common, or in Particular. *They receive.* ] Take, or accept of. *Any Coin or Mony.* ] Which instituted by publick Authority, serves for a formal Instrument of Buying and Selling, what ever Metal or Matter it be made of. *Either by Themselves.* ] Immediately in their own Persons, by taking it into their hands, or by giving orders to have it laid in some Box, Chest, or other Place in their custody. *Or by an Interpos'd Person.* ] Whether Domestick or Stranger, that is order'd, commission'd, depu'd, or permitted and allow'd by the Brethren to receive it, keep it, spend it, lay it out, or otherwise dispose of it in their Names, and by their Authority, or according to their positive directions, pleasure and good liking

king. In a word, in no kind of way let them receive any Coin or Mony; but exactly fulfill that Evangelical Precept deliver'd by our Saviour to his Apostles and prime Disciples: *Do not possess Gold, nor Silver, nor Mony in your Purses.* That so they may be able to say with S. Paul: *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, and I do esteem all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: For whom I have suffer'd the loss of all things, and do count them but Dung, that I may gain Christ.*

Our Holy Founder upon this Text, very particularly in his first Rule, lets us see how mean and contemptible an opinion we ought to have of this abominable *Idol* of Mony, now-adays plac'd upon the Altars of the whole World, where he expresses himself after the following manner. "Our Lord has commanded in the Gospel: Beware of all Guile, and Avarice; and look well to yourselves, lest perhaps your Hearts be overcharg'd with the cares and solitudes of this Life. Wherefore let none of the Brethren, wherever they be, or whithersoever they go, by any means take with them, or receive, or cause to be receiv'd any Coin or Mony, either upon the account of Clothes, or for Books, or for reward of their Labour, yea upon no account; for we ought not to derive any more benefit, nor make any more reckning of Coin or Mony, than of Stones. And the Devil will blind all such as covet it, and make more account of it than of Stones. Let us take care therefore, we that have left all, that we do not for so small a Trifle loose the kingdom of Heaven. And if by chance we should find Mony in any place, let us have no more regard for it, than for the Dust we kick with our feet; for *Vanity of vanities, and all is Vanity.*

§. III. From hence it follows, that they transgress this

Cc ij

Precept,

*have Mony, enter into the kingdom of God? Luc.*

18. 24.

*Math.* 10. 9.

*Philip.* 3. 7.

what small account our Holy Father made of Mony.

1. Reg. c. 8.

Several Cases

wherein we  
transgress  
this Precept.

Precept, first, who command, or consent to the borrowing or lending of Money, whether it be for gain or no; or to the hoarding up of Money. Also who upon their own Authority, spend Money given for a determined necessity, contrary to the Intention of the Giver, applying it to another Use than what he design'd. Also who receive, keep, use, dispose of, or distribute Money for other People. Also who receive, or exact a Juridical account of Money given. Also who vex, molest, and sue Debtors at law for Money. Also who put trunks or boxes for Money at the Sacristy or Church door. Also who pay, give, or keep Money by them, or the Key of boxes and trunks where Money is, as the Masters thereof. Also those, whether present or absent, who by another in their own Name beg Money. Also those who give Quittances for Money; or are Responsible for Money; or exact Money as due from any one upon the count of Labour, corporal or spiritual; or who bargain for Money, or make use of Money in Bying and Selling, or upon any other score whatever. Lastly, those who carry the Money of Seculars, to the end it may be given or paid to such as by them are to be appointed. For all these Actions, are either the Propriety, Dominion or Possession of Money, or else the Use and Administration of Money, by Themselves, or by Persons Interpos'd.

Other Cases  
wherein we  
obscure it.

§. IV. They nevertheless transgress not this Precept, who accept of Money left them by Legacy, for Reward of their labours, or other ways, and deposited in the hands of the Syndick, to be dispos'd of by him according to the intention of the Donor; so they be not perpetual Legacies, or Provisions for many Years. Neither is there forbid by the said Precept a simple and material handling of Money, so it be done without Scandal. Nor the receiving of Money to be immediately converted into Chalice, Pattins, or such like. Nor the Keeping of Money for others, so it be without Civil oblig-

obligation of answering for it. And this even to the handling or carrying it, if there be any danger of losing the same, remaining in the hands of the Owner. Nor lastly, the receiving or using of Mony ourselves in case of Extreme Necessity; for example, when one travels or lives among Infidels, where it were hard to subsist otherwise. For then the Lesser obligation gives place to the Greater; as is this Precept of not receiving Mony, compar'd to that of preserving our Corporal Life; the one being of Humane Institution, the other of Natural Divine. This point it behoves our Missioners nicely to examine, that they may discharge a good Conscience, and indulge themselves no more, as to the Use of Mony, (for Proprietors and Masters of it, they can never pretend to be) than pure Necessity allows; courageously rejecting what Sensuality, or Avarice may suggest to them. So that if they cannot in the Mission observe this Precept of the Rule in its full vigor and perfection, as having perhaps no Spiritual Friend or Syndick there at hand; at least they ought to come up to it as near as they can, and make no farther Use of Mony than what is necessary for Self-preservation. See what we have said Chap. XII. upon this Subject.

How far it is lawful for our Missioners to make use of Mony.

O my Soul! embrace with a cheerfull heart Holy Poverty, since thy Celestial Master embrac'd the same, to purchase for thee an Everlasting Crown. Cast thyself betwixt his arms, and his fatherly Providence will never fail thee. Fly from Earthly Riches which occasion so many Troubles, and place thy glory and comfort in the Contempt of them, to love and enjoy those that are Eternal. O dear Master! I will no more confide in Mony, though all the world adore and bow down before it; but only in thee, who art the true and only Riches of thine Elect. O most Holy Poverty! O divine and desirable Treasure! O rich and precious Jewél! Who is it that reflects on thy real Value, and presently sells not all to buy thee; leaves not all to follow thee; suffers not all to enjoy thee; concerns not all, to possess thee?

S. V. *Notwithstanding.*] Although our Holy Founder fully here

here intend the strict observation of the fore-said Precept of not receiving Mony upon any account whatsoever: Yet as to those things that cannot conveniently be had in their kind but by the means of Mony; either by Alms freely offer'd, or by Begging, or by Working; condescending therein through paternal Charity to the Necessities of his Brethren, he allows them, notwithstanding they are to be bought; so the Brethren themselves have nothing to do with the Mony wherewith they are purchas'd, and upon condition the said things be really Necessary, and suitable to their Poverty; lest otherwise the Order should come to fail, for want of Conveniences wherewith to subsist: And therefore it follows in the Text

*For the Necessities of the Sick, and Clothing of the other Brethren.*

*Clem. V. cap. 4.*

Under which Two, according to Pope Clement, as the Principal ones, all other such like Necessities are comprehended. *Let the Ministers and (nustodes Only)* By whom, according to Pope Nicolas, are likewise understood Guardians and Presidents, and Vicars in their absence; and sometimes by a special Commission, Particular Brothers; or without a Commission, in case of manifest Necessity, or of Superiours notable Defect: *Have a diligent Care.* ] Being bound under strict obligation by this Text, to procure for their respective Subjects all such Necessary things. *By Spiritual Friends.* ] By having Recourse to such Persons, as for the love of God and out of devotion to the Order, are willing, being entreated by the Brethren, to give Mony to defray the fore-said Necessities; to whom therefore the said Superiours are to have Recourse, after the example of our Saviour and his Apostles, who did the like to the devout Women that accompany'd them, when their Necessities could not conveniently be supply'd otherways; as may be gather'd from the Holy Scriptures, *Math. 27. 55. Luc. 8. 3. and 1 Cor. 9. 4.* According to Times, Places, and cold Regions. ]

And

*Nic. III.*

*Art. 7.*

*A Faithful and Wise Servant, whom his Lord has appointed over his Family, to give them Meat in season. Blessed is that Servant, whom when his Lord comes, he shall find so doing.*  
*Math. 24. 45.*

Recourse to  
Spiritual

**6.VI. Their Recourse to Spiritual Friends. 207**

And other circumstances of Persons, Employments &c. *As they shall see Expedient for their Necessity.*] According to which, Superiours are to regulate themselves, with proportion to our strict Poverty and penurious course of Life: Which is well to be observ'd; for what is Moderate, and only Sufficient, or Necessary for some Religious, as *Augustins, Benedictines, Carthusians, &c.* in respect of *Frier-Minors*, (whose State is a state of the greatest Austerity, of the profoundest Humility, and of the strictest Poverty imaginable) may be accounted Curious, Precious, or Superfluous; all which is forbidden us, and excluded here by the word, *Necessity.*

Friends conform to the Holy Scripture.

We call that *Curious*, which serves to delight and please the Senses, rather than satisfy Nature, or supply our real wants; as the artificial and gaudy decking of a Room, when plain and simple Furniture will do. We call that *Precious*, which in regard of our Minoritiae Poverty or moderate Use of things, exceeds in value, estimation or price; as to have a Golden Chalice when a Silver one suffices, to have Pewter dishes when Earthen or Wooden ones will serve. And lastly, that we call *Superfluous*, which we can conveniently be without, or independent of which our own or the Community's Necessities may be sufficiently supply'd, without any inconvenience or prejudice to the functions of our Calling; as to have two things of a kind when one is enough, to have a greater Quantity of any thing when a less will serve our turns. All which have degrees of latitude; according to the different circumstances of Persons, Things, Places; Times; and must be regulated by the prudence, zeal and conscience of Superiours, to whom it is left, with a strict charge to particular Brothers not to meddle therein without a special Commission, as is clear from these words of the Text, *Let the Ministers and Custodes Only.*

The difference betwixt things Curious, Precious, and Superfluous.

**S. VI.**



What is understood by things Necessary? Or, what are the Conditions of the thing for which we may have Recourse to Spiritual Friends?

§. VI. Moreover it is to be noted, that the fore-said Necessity, for the satisfying whereof Money may be procur'd: I. must be a true, sincere and unfeign'd one; that is, the thing which is to be procur'd must be such, that we cannot be without it conveniently, without suffering some real prejudice or incommodity, either Spiritual or Temporal belonging to our Profession. For if our Rule allows us not, even so much as the bare Use of any thing Superfluous, though it be Given, Begg'd, or earn'd by Labour; much less do's it permit us to have Recourse to Spiritual Friends to procure any such by the help of Money. II. It must be such a Necessity as cannot be supply'd any other way, as we said, than by the means of Money; that is, neither by Almes freely offer'd, nor by Labour, nor by Begging; which are the three Means appointed us for providing our Corporal Necessities; so that we cannot have Recourse to a Spiritual Friend for Money to pay for the thing we want, if it can conveniently be procur'd any of those three fore-said ways. III. It must be a certain, determin'd, and particular Necessity; not one indifferent, confus'd, and in general. IV. It must be a Necessity either past, present, or imminent and near at hand; not one possible only, or simply future. V. It must be a Necessity, not of other Peoples, but of the Brethrens own, or some ways appertaining to them. So that in all our Recourses to Spiritual Friends, a Necessity is to be suppos'd, that is accompany'd with these five Conditions; otherwise it will be no true and real Necessity, such as the Rule here, under strict obligation of conscience requires. And although it be not to be always an extraordinary or so strict a one; yet ought it to be such an one, that if it be not supply'd, the Community of Brethren, or the Brothers in particular, cannot commodiously discharge their Duty, or cannot sufficiently be provided with Meat, Drink and Clothes, and other Necessaries answerable to their Calling.

§. VII

**S. VII. VIII. *Their Recourse to Spiritual Friends.* 209**

**S. VII.** Now as to the Manner of making this Recourse, Superiours may serve themselves of this or the like Form. If it be to the principal Giver, thus : Sr, we beg for God's sake, you will please to pay for such or such things NN. which we stand in need of. If it be to his Substitute, or to the Syndick : Sr, we beg you will be pleas'd, out of the Mony which is deposited in your hands, to supply such and such wants NN. If the Mony is to pass through several hands, thus : Sr, we pray you will take care to send such a sum of Mony to such and such Creditors NN. by what hands you think most convenient.

A practical  
form of Re-  
course.

**S. VIII.** *Always this excepted, as is said, they receive no Coin or Mony.* Either by Themselves, or by any Person Interpos'd, after the manner before explain'd. But that their Spiritual Friends, to whom they have Recourse, order the matter so, as to satisfy for the Brethrens Necessities by the means of Mony, either by themselves or by their Substitutes; without the Brethren having any thing to do with the said Mony in receiving it, counting it, keeping it, paying it, disposing or using it in any Juridical, Civil, or Politick kind whatever, either immediately by Themselves, or by an Interpos'd Person.

Now the better to give you to understand this, and let you see that these two eminent Precepts of our holy Rule, *Of having Recourse to Spiritual Friends, and of not Receiving Mony*, are no ways incompatible, but do agree very well together, without their least interfering one with the other, some things are here to be observ'd. I. What is meant, according to the Intention of our Holy Founder, by a Spiritual Friend. II. Wherein the nature of this Recourse do's consist. III. What difference there is betwixt this Spiritual Friend and a common Benefactor. IV. How a Spiritual Friend differs from a Syndick. V. How from an Interpos'd Person. In all

which we will be as brief as possibly may be, not to exceed the bounds I propos'd to my self in this Treatise.

A Spiritual Friend what?

And in the first place, by a Spiritual Friend mention'd in this Chapter, is understood One, who for the love of God, or out of good will and affection to the Brethren, being entreated, gives Money to pay for such things as the Brethren stand in need of, and which cannot be provided otherwise; whether he pay the Money himself, or his Substitute do it by his authority and in his name.

wherein consists this Recourse.

Secondly, as to the nature of this Recourse, it is nothing else, on the part of Superiours, but their diligent Care, as the Rule words it, or their actual soliciting and procuring the Payment of the thing they want, to be perform'd either by the principal Giver, or by his Substitute.

The difference between a Spiritual Friend and a Benefactor.

§. IX. Thirdly, a Spiritual Friend differs from a Benefactor in this, that the Name of Spiritual Friend is of less extent than that of Benefactor. For all the Brethren indifferently may have Recourse to a Benefactor for Alms in *Specie*, but none but Superiours, and such as they give Commission to, can have Recourse to a Spiritual Friend. The reason of this Difference is, that one begs the thing he wants, in its Kind, being not solicitous whether the Benefactor has it by him or not, or whether he be oblig'd to buy it, which is a chance in respect of the Brother that begs the said thing. As it happens in the Quests of Oil, Wax, Meat, Butter, Bread, Candles, Wood &c. none or few of which things, for the most part, the Benefactors have in a readiness at home, but they send to buy them when the Brethren come a Questing. The other begs or solicites the Payment of the thing whereof he has occasion. So that in Begging, the Brother's express, chief, and formal intention is the Thing itself; but in having Recourse to a Spiritual Friend, his primary, formal, and direct intention is the Payment of the thing.

OF

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or procuring the solution of it by Mony. Which is well to be understood, and here to be taken notice of, to prevent the Scruples of those, who think, that whenever the thing is bought which they demand in Questing, it is presently having Recourse to a Spiritual Friend contrary to the Rule; when as it is no such matter, but pure down right Begging, as in the fore-said Quests.

§. X. Fourthly, a Spiritual Friend and a Syndick are distinguish'd, in that a Syndick is a Person expressly ordain'd or constituted by the authority of the Pope, as his Delegate, at the nomination of the General, Provincial, or Custos, for their respective Districts: To receive, change, sell, or alienate in the name of the *Holy See*, all such moveable or immoveable Goods as are granted the Brethren to use; and to convert them, when occasion requires, into other uses to supply the Brethrens Necessities: And likewise to require, exact, sue for, and defend the same by Law: As also to receive all Pecuniary Almes, Legacies, and other such things, whose dominion, propriety, and civil use the Benefactors have quitted and abdicated from themselves; which they are presum'd to do, if in bestowing their Almes of what kind soever, they express not the contrary either by word or sign: And also to lay them out, expend, or otherways dispose of them for the use of the Brethren, without any regard had to the first Donors, but only in the Pope's name, as the true Master, Proprietor and Lord thereof. And this, according as Superiours shall insinuate, or desire of him; for so is his Holynesse's will and pleasure, these being acquainted with their own Necessities, and the Obligations of their Rule, much better than the Syndick; whose Directions therefore by the Pope's order, as his Master, he is oblig'd to follow in expending the Alms of the Faithful that are in his hands. All which acts, a Spiritual Friend as such, cannot perform, having not a Commission for it.

The difference between a Spiritual Friend and a Syndick. The Institution, and Office of a Syndick.

How the  
same Person  
may be both  
Syndick and  
Spiritual  
Friend.

Yet this hinders not, but that a Spiritual Friend may be a Syndick, if instituted; and a Syndick may also be a Spiritual Friend, either in quality of a principal Giver, or of a Substitute, if deputed by the principal; as it often happens, the Benefactors for the most part making choice of the Syndick for their Delegate, as a Person the most faithful, best qualify'd, and most proper for expending their Charities. In which case, when these two charitable Offices meet together in one Person, the said Person must carefully distinguish between what things he has in his hands belonging to the Pope's Holyness, and what to the Benefactors, when these retain to themselves the propriety and dominion of the things they give; and in expending them conform himself to their respective Intentions, and to the Obligations of the Rule, in not laying them out upon things Curious, Pretious, or Superfluous, nor in receiving any such: But in all, and through all, there must be a Necessity, such as we declar'd above, to excuse both the Syndick and the Brethren from transgressing.

Farther In-  
structions for  
Syndicks.

But to conceive yet more clearly the nature of the Institution and Office of a Syndick, and to give the said Syndicks better to understand, upon whose Authority, and after what Manner they are to proceed in the execution of their Trust, it will be here necessary they take notice; That *Frier-Minors* by reason of their strict Poverty are incapable of all dominion, propriety, possession, and juridical or civil use, not only of Money, but of any other Temporal thing whatsoever; yet are allow'd the *simple use of Fact*, as they call it, of all worldly Goods (except Money) that are necessary for the preservation of Life, and the maintainance of their State in meat, drink, clothes, lodging &c. within the bounds of their Poverty, which, as we said, excludes all Pretiousness, Curiosity and Superfluity. Now that the said Things, for want of an Owner, (the Benefactors being suppos'd in bestowing their

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their Almshouses to have renounc'd all right and title thereto) may not remain under an uncertain and unknown Dominion, and so come to be expos'd and fall a Prey to the first Occupier; the Popes of *Rome* out of affection and tenderness to the poor Order of *S. Francis*, have taken upon them the Propriety and civil Possession of all the fore-said things, in quality of universal Pastors, Protectors, and Fathers of the Poor, to whom by right it belongs to order, and dispose of all pious Legacies and Donations, made to God and the Church for pious Uses.

The Pope  
Master of all  
things be-  
longing to  
the Order.

Thus then, the Pope's Holiness being become absolute Master and Proprietor of all things given to the Order, whether Money or Goods; and not able, by reason of the more important Affairs of the Church upon his hands, to manage them Himself, has, at the request, and nomination of the Superiours of the Order, appointed and substituted certain devout and conscientious Persons for his Syndicks, Procurators, Stewards, or Receivers; enabling them to do all those offices in his Name of *buying, selling, changing &c.* which true Proprietors and Masters are capable of by the Law; without the Brethren troubling themselves, or meddling therein, or laying any claim or title to the said things; but as things Lent, purely and simply using them with the Pope's and Church's permission, under whose free Disposition they remain. This is the Sum of what has been order'd for securing the Brethrens consciences, and the purer observation of our *Seraphical Rule*, by all the Popes from *Greg. IX.* to this Day. Who have ever been careful to confine the power of their Syndicks within the bounds of our Holy Rule, limiting their authority with this *Proviso*: That they act nothing contrary to the Purity of the same, and the approv'd *Declarations* of the Church thereupon; wherein if they fail, all they shall do will be invalid and of no effect, as exceeding

The Syndick  
the Pope's  
Delegate.

ding

ding therein their Commission. And therefore, conformable to the Pope's intention, it much imports those Superiours whom it concerns, particularly Guardians, to take care the Syndicks be well instructed in the obligations of our State, especially those that regard our Poverty; lest they be accountable for the abuses, which the Syndicks through ignorance shall commit in the discharge of their Offices.

The difference between a Spiritual Friend and an Interpos'd Person.

XI. Lastly, a Spiritual Friend and an Interpos'd Person, in the sense of our Holy Founder, do likewise greatly differ; whether by a Spiritual Friend you understand the principal Giver or his Substitute, or the Pope's Holiness and his Agent the Syndick: Neither of which can with any just colour be term'd a Person Interpos'd, a Servant, a Receiver, a Steward, a Procurator, a Substitute, a Delegate, or what ever else you please to call him, in regard of the Brethren. The reason of this is manifest; because None of all these do either receive, keep, pay, order, or dispose of Mony or any Thing else, in the name and by the authority of the Brethren; but according to the will and pleasure of the principal Donors, towit, the Benefactors, or the Pope's Holiness; who alone are Masters of it, and can give it to Whom they please, and after what Manner they please. But the Brethren are only their poor Suppliants and *Beads-Men*, begging them for God's sake they will please to help them in their Wants, as they shall think fit, either by themselves, or by others deputed in their Names; without the Brethren so much as presenting or recommending the Persons to be deputed by them, without their leaves. Which Mony also remains in the power and dominion of him that gave it, untill such time it be converted into the use design'd for the Brethren. And this the Brethren are bound to expresse, as Occasion serves, and shew by all manner of signs and tokens, as well in actions as words, that the Mony given for their use, no ways be-  
longs

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longs to them, as Owners and Proprietors thereof. Neither can the Brethren so much as consent to the receiving of any more Mony, by the Syndick or other Person, than what their past, present, or imminent Necessity requires; and that being supplied, what thereof remains, returns again to the Owners, and the Brethren must not make use or dispose of it to purchase any other Thing, than what it was given for, without their express, if present, or tacite and rationally presum'd leaves and consents, if absent.

§. XII. Now the Obligation of having Recourse to Spiritual Friends, according to what has been said, remaining at the Ministers, Custodes, and other Superiours doors, it is their parts to see that nothing be wanting to their Subjects, and likewise that they have nothing Pretious, Curious, or Superfluous; like *Good-Men* of the House, procuring, and distributing with a paternal tenderness and solicitude every thing in its due time, with *Number, Weight and Measure*: So to preserve in its full vigor Religious Discipline, and shut up the passage to an infinity of Disorders, which ordinarily proceed from a Community's having either too Much, or too Little.

Especially this last, is most pernicious and fatal to Communities; from whence spring a multitude of mischiefs, as the neglect of Divine Service, of Quire-duties, of Spiritual Exercises, of Regular Observance, perpetual Solicitudes, anxious Cares, Excursions, Distractions, Propriety, Singularity, Envy, Jealousy, Theft, Murmuring, Complaints, Contentions, Divisions among the Brethren. When they see their Prelates, into whose hands they had deliver'd themselves both Body and Soul, take no care to procure them Necessaries, according to promise made them at their Profession; they are induc'd thereby every one to take care of themselves, to the prejudice of brotherly Charity and of a Community

The Obligation of Superiours in this Matter.

The great Disorders that ensue upon their failing therein.



nity life, getting what they can here and there, right or wrong, of the goods of their Monasteries, and applying them to their own Proper uses what were design'd for the Common. They importune Friends and Benefactors, entertain their friendships and good wills by servile complacencies, loss of time, and other ways misbecoming their Profession; which puts all into confusion, and destroys Religion Root and Branch. And therefore the failing in this Point, is esteem'd a matter of so very great Importance, that Guardians and other Superiours guilty thereof, are declar'd by the *Constitutions* of the Order, *ipso facto*, immediately upon the spot depriv'd of their Offices; as most grievously offending God, Religion, and Nature, and therefore unworthy to have any part in the Government of their Brethren. For according to *S. Paul*, *If any Man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own House, he has deny'd the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel*. It is the grand Law of Nature, written by God with a style of fire, not only on the hearts of all living Creatures, but even on Plants, that Parents provide for their Children, and cherish what they have produc'd. Grapes hang on the Vine, Fruits on the Tree, and take with time their just increase from the juice and substance of the Wood which brings them forth. The Lamb knows his Dam among a thousand to suck her, and ask the tribute of nature. And the Pelican, as the report is, lets herself blood, to make a bath of it for her brood. O admirable Lesson! And hence the holy Council of *Trent* gives a strict charge to all Superiours to provide their Subjects of Moveables, permitting them the use thereof in such sort, that nothing therein be wanting to them, nor nothing likewise superfluous, according to the Poverty which they have profess'd. And if any one adds the Council in regard of the Subject, be found or convicted otherwise to keep

*Stat. Gen.*  
*q. 3. p. 5.*

*1. Tim. 5. 8.*

*Sess. 25. de*  
*Regul. c. 2.*

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 keep any thing by him, let him be depriv'd of Active and Passive Voice for the space of two Years, and moreover be punish'd according to the Constitutions of his Rule, and Order. Thus the holy Council.

Now as to the Manner of acquitting themselves of this important Charge, behold here a brief Method for Superiours. First, a diligent and tender care must be had of the Sick; then the Brethren must be Cloth'd, and Meat and Drink provided; the Church, and Convent repair'd; the Sacristy, Infirmary; Library, Kitchin, and all other Offices of the House furnish'd and entertain'd with Necessaries. And all this answerable to the Poverty, Modesty, and Simplicity of the Order; of which Superiours alone, without Inferiours meddling or giving their Verdict therein, are to judge, to whose Consciences it is left, with regard to the circumstances of Time, Place, Persons, Offices, &c. as has already been declar'd.

O Gracious Lord God! O bountiful Benefactor! O great Purveyor of the Universe! who open'st thy Hand, and fill'st every Creature with thy Blessing. Impart (I most humbly beseech thee) one little ray of this loving Providence to thy unworthy Servant, whom thou hast been pleas'd to make choice of to govern this little Flock under thee: To the end, that in imitation of thy divine Bounry, I may use all diligent Care, by the help of Spiritual Friends and other convenient Means, to provide them what Necessaries the nature and circumstances of their State require, and perfectly accomplish in their behalves the part of a tender Father towards his dearly beloved Children.

We that are Subjects, our Duty is, gratefully to receive, and to well employ the *Charities* of the Faithful; of which we must one Day render an account, as of the Sweat and Blood of poor people: To be contented with Moderate things according to our State, and not importune Superiours for things Curious, Precious, or Superfluous, which is not in their power to grant us, as we shew'd you above: To endeavour

The Obligation of the Subject.

deavour to cultivate and entertain the Friendship of *Bene-  
factors*, by an humble, modest and religious Behaviour;  
which is a most powerful means to induce them to continue  
their good will and affection towards us, to compassionate  
our poverty, and relieve our wants: To shew ourselves di-  
ligent in the service of the Publick, in Preaching, hearing  
Confessions, visiting the Sick, in devoutly performing the  
Divine Office, celebrating Mass &c. To offer up our Prayers,  
Sacrifices, Fasts, Mortifications, Penances, and other me-  
ritorious works for the prosperity and welfare of their Persons  
and Families: To beseech God to reward their Charities,  
and make a happy exchange of their Temporals for Eternals:  
And lastly, to bless his Divine Majesty every hour of the Day  
for his singular Providence over the whole Order, opening  
for us the Hearts and Purses of the Faithful, (yea many times  
of Infidels) and sending them seasonably to our Relief, as  
we daily experience to our unspeakable comforts.

O most loving and tender Father / we render thee all the  
thanks possibly we may for this thy sweet Providence over us.  
Grant, dear Lord, that we may have a special care to serve,  
love, and obey thee as thy Children, since thou takest care to  
find us all things necessary like a Father.

*Opus. Tom. 3.  
Collat. 5.*

A Covenant  
between FF.  
MM. and the  
World.

Our Holy Founder was us'd to say, That there was a Co-  
venant between *Frier-Minors* and the World; whereby the  
World, by the appointment of Heaven, is oblig'd to furnish  
us with Necessaries, and we to furnish the World with good  
Examples: And by how much the more exactly we acquit  
ourselves of this charge, so much the more abundantly shall  
we be supply'd with all we stand in need of. But if we once  
begin to fail on our parts, and neglect the observance of our  
Holy Rule, the World will by little and little withdraw its  
hands, and deny us, not only their accustomed Almes, but  
also that Respect, which is due to us as Religious Men and  
Persons

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Persons consecrated to God. Take this for an undoubted truth, whereof our *Chronicles* are full of instances, and daily Experience will also sufficiently convince you, if you make but the least serious reflection upon the loose Communities of the Order; which then only begin to leave to Abound, when they begin to leave to be Devout; according to that saying of the Wise-Man: *There is Poverty from our Lord in the House of the Impious; but the Habitations of the Just shall be blessed.*

*Prov. 3. 33.*

Wherefore, my dear Brethren, if we desire to draw Heavens Benediction upon us, let us use all possible endeavours to walk worthy of our holy Vocation, in the streight path of Evangelical Poverty. Let us content ourselves with what is barely Necessary; and absolutely banish from our Sacrifices, Churches, and Altars, from our Speak-houses, Cloisters, Guest-Chambers, Libraries, Refectories, and other Offices of our Convents; every thing that looks curious, rich, gaudy, or has any appearance of ostentation; as too much smelling of vanity and prophaness. O let us never permit the Pomp and Pride of the world, which we have forsaken, to set foot again into our Order. But in all things let us appear like Poor Men, in our Victuals, Clothes, Lodgings. Let our Chambers have nothing in them, but what is precisely Necessary, and that too of the Worst in its kind; the basest Implements, the plainest Tables, the meanest Chairs, the poorest Ink-horns, the coarsest Paper, the hardest Beds, and the thinnest Bed-clothes. Let not our Study-places be stuff'd and crammi'd with superfluous Books, but return those to the Library, which we do not actually stand in need of; and never be in love with that piece of Vanity of having a great number of them upon our Shelves. But let us hearken to the advice which our Holy Father gives us. "In Books," says he, "the Brethren should seek the Word of God; not

An exhortation to the Brethren of the Practice of Holy Poverty.

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Orac. 28.*

Ec ij      their

,, their Price, nor their Beauty. And they likewise should  
 ,, have but few, and those in Common, and be ready to  
 ,, give them up, when their Brethren stand in need of them.  
 Let not our Breviaries and Diurnals be curious, or finely  
 gilt, but rather coarse, ordinary, and plain. Let our Pic-  
 tures, Beads, *Agnus-Dei's*, Crofles, Reliquaries be of mean  
 value, and in all things conformable to the Poverty we have  
 vow'd; resting assur'd, that the more our Simplicity and Po-  
 verty appear, the more agreeable we shall be in the sight of  
 God and his Saints. Let us send into an everlasting Banish-  
 ment, as the Plagues of our *Seraphical Order*, all plaited  
 Garments, white Cords, Caps, Graters, Snuff-boxes, and  
 other such Inventions of libertine, sensual, and idle Men;  
 lovers of their Bodies, and profess'd enemies of Mortification  
 and Penance. Our Holy Father said very well, that an Af-  
 fection in a Religious Man to curious and unnecessary things,  
 is a sign of the Souls being Dead; for it cannot proceed but  
 from the want of life and warmth of Divine Grace; and  
 therefore not finding any satisfaction in Spiritual things, seeks  
 its comfort and ease elsewhere. Daily experience confirms  
 this truth, and makes us see that not only Holy Poverty,  
 the Gem of our Order, but all Religion and fervour of  
 Spirit also is destroy'd by these Trifles. In fine, let us love,  
 and even rejoyce, to suffer for *Jesus-Christ*, all the incon-  
 veniencies of Poverty, which are Touch-stones thereof; such  
 as are, Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Weariness, Nakedness, and  
 a real Want of things: Yea, let us not content ourselves  
 to forsake all inclinations to unprofitable and superfluous  
 things, but break off also all affection even to those that are  
 necessary, and shew our love of Poverty by a want as well  
 of these, as of others. I speak not here of such things  
 as are absolutely necessary for Life, for these we cannot be  
 without; but I would have us content ourselves with such

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as are absolutely necessary, by contracting this Necessity within very strait bounds, as we see Millions of poor People in the world do; and thereby shew, that we are glad of any occasion to give testimony of our love of Holy Poverty. Otherwise how shall we glory in the Name of *Frier-Minors*, that is, Poor Men, if we be unwilling to want the least Conveniency? We are oblig'd, says *Quaranto*, by our Vow of Poverty, to suffer the want of many things, yea and to be depriv'd even of such as are in some wise Necessary, as the Holy Congregation has declar'd. And *a Polittio* teaches, that a *Frier-Minor*, who for the observation of his Rule, will not suffer any Scarcity, nor lack any thing he has a mind to, lives in the state of Damnation.

*V. Casus Reserv. pag. 156.*

*In Cap. 6. n. 92.*

But above all, let us shew ourselves zealous in the punctual observance of this Divine Precept *Of Receiving no Money*, as it is the most eminent of the whole Rule. Let us make appear by words, signs, and actions, that we have in perfect detestation and horror that abominable *Idol* of Gold and Silver, which the world so much adores; animated by two powerful Considerations, which are, the extream Poverty of the Son of God on one side, and on the other, the Providential Care of the Heavenly Father over us; and encouraging ourselves, let us say.

O blessed Poverty, the glory and ornament of our *Seraphical Order*, which didst receive the Lord and Master of the Universe, as born between thine arms in a wretched Stable, and who saw'st him conclude his innocent life in so great Nakedness, that it had no other Veil to cover it, but the Blood which gush'd from his wounds! Must it needs be, that having been so much honour'd by the king of Monarchs, and all Saints who waited on him, thou here below should'st be reputed as the dregs of Nature, the scum of the world, and the fury of Humane life? Must Christians come to that pass, rather to desire to be esteem'd Crafty, Robbers, and Excommunicates, than Poor? My God! from this time I renounce with all my heart all worldly Goods,  
and

and am ready to be despoil'd, even to the last Nakedness, the more perfectly to enter into the imitation of thy Poverty. Thou art all my Riches, and with thee I am content in the want of all other wealth. All Plenty, which is not God, is meer Penury to me.

And on the other side, O my dear Brethren, what fear you? Why are you Sollicitous? What do you trouble yourselves about? Is it for Meat, Drink and Clothes? See you not, how little Birds that fly in the air and clouds, silly Butter-fly's which flutter through the meadows, painted with the enamel of flowers, and Flowers themselves which are but Hay, repose with all sweet satisfaction, under the royal Mantle of the great Providence that covers All? Birds by his help, find grain fit for them; Butter-fly's suck out the dew and iuice of flowers; and Flowers which live but one Day, unfold them with beauties, that nothing yield to *Satan*'s Magnificencies. There is not any Creature so little in the world, which lifts not up its eye to the paternal hand of God, distilling Dew and Manna, and is never frustrated of its hopes. There is none but wretched Man, who having a reasonable Soul, stamp'd with the image of God, suffers his Discretion to contribute to the excess of his Miseries. Does he not well deserve to be poor, since God is not rich enough for him? No man, how poor soever, comes to the Poverty wherein he is born, and whereto he must return. We should possess All, had we learn'd to desire Nothing. He that must Dye, needs very few worldly things; and a very little Cabin will suffice Nature, but whole Kingdoms will not satisfy Covetousness. Let us be wise; and we shall ever have sufficient. A Vertuous Man thinks nothing is without him but Sin. Wheresoever he sets his foot, he finds a kingdom. All the world belongs to him, because he uses all the world as his own.

AVOID.

Avoid, be gone you importunate cares of Worldly Goods; you little Tyrants, which burn the blood within our veins, and fill the most innocent pleasures of our life with bitter sorrows, what have I more to do with you? O my Soul, let us content ourselves to be what God pleases; we shall ever be Rich enough, if Vertuous enough. Sacred Providence! we prostrate on the earth adore thee; vindicate us from the bondage of our Passions, make us dye to so many dead things of Mortals, that we hereafter may live in thy Delights.



## Of the Manner of Labouring.

### CHAP. V.

*Those Brethren, to whom God has given the grace to labour, let them labour Faithfully, and Devoutly; in such manner that excluding Idleness, the Enemy of the Soul, they extinguish not the Spirit of holy Prayer and Devotion, whereto other Temporal things ought to be subservient. And for the Reward of their Labour, for themselves and their Brethren, let them receive such things as are Necessary for the Body, except Coin or Money. And this with Humility, as becomes the servants of God, and followers of most holy Poverty.*

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## THE EXPOSITION.

Our Lord God  
took Man, and  
put him in the  
Paradise of  
pleasure, to  
work, and  
take care of it.  
Gen. 2. 15.  
Hate not labo-  
rious Works,  
and Husban-  
dry created of  
the Highest.  
Eccli. 7. 16.  
The Inten-  
tion of our H.  
F. in enjoy-  
ning us La-  
bour, what?  
Math. 22. 36.

§. I. **T** *Hese Brethren.* ] As well Priests and Clerks, as Lay-Brothers. *To whom God has given the grace to Labour.* ] Sufficient talents, as Art, Industry, Strength of body &c. *Let them Labour.* ] Being oblig'd there-to, as well as other Christians, by the Law both of God and Nature; in as much as Labour is necessary for gaining a Livelyhood, avoiding Idleness, &c. *Faithfully.* ] In regard of Men. *And Devoutly.* ] with respect to God. Not that our Holy Founder do's here prefer corporal Labour before spiritual; but because change and variety of Occupations is delightful, and that the Bow cannot always be bent, nor the Mind intent upon one and the same thing: Hence it is, that he advises his Brethren, that when they are not actually imploy'd in spiritual Labours, to exercise themselves in some corporal Occupations; so-to shut up the gate against Idleness, which every one is bound to shun. For if it be certain, *That every idle word that Men shall speak, they shall render Account for it in the Day of Judgment;* how much more of the loss of our precious Time, and of our Lives spent in unprofitable and evil Actions? The prudent and religious Oeconomy of our Holy Rule in this Text then is this, That the Brethren be all imploy'd: Some in Prayer, Study, Teaching, Preaching, hearing Confessions, and such like Exercises belonging to the Spirit; others busy themselves in Corporal Labours; but both are forbid to be Idle, for the great and manifold dammages that ensue to Religion thereby. And therefore it follows in the Text.

What stand  
you here all the  
day idle?  
Math. 20. 6.

*In such manner, that excluding Idleness, the Enemy of the Soul.* ] The Devils pillow, and contriver of all mischief: From whence proceed Sauciness, Impudence, impertinent Prating, Curiosity, Pride, Vanity, Theft, Envy, Anger, Gluttony,

Gluttony, Contentions, Quarrels, Murmurs, Detractions, Jealousies, rash Judgments, superfluous Sleep, Luxury and the whole Tribe of the sins of the Flesh, with a thousand others. In such sort, that it is not without very good reason, that the *Constitutions* of the Order expressly declare, an Idle Religious Man to have no safe Conscience, and that he deserves to be depriv'd both of Active and Passive Voice, and unworthy to bear any Office among us. And moreover, Divines are of opinion, that they commit a Mortal Sin, and live in an evil State, who sit with Armes across from week to week; and spend their Time idly without any Corporal or Spiritual exercise; withdrawing themselves, if Priests or Clerks, from Quire-duties, from Study, Meditations, Conferences, Spiritual Lectures, and other occupations belonging to their Callings; and living in such manner, that if they were in the world they would not so much as earn the Bread they eat. And for Lay-Brothers, if they be considerably negligent and careless in their respective Charges for the service of the Community, as are the Offices of the house, Quests, and other works impos'd upon them by Obedience, for which they were receiv'd, and at their entrance into Religion solemnly promis'd to perform. All these, I say, do most grievously offend both God and Religion, by failing in their Duties through sloth, impatience, tepidity, disgust, want of care, sluggishness, or other ways. And still more hainously, if by lying, flattering, and playing the Hypocrites, they alledge to Superiours frivolous and false pretexts, whereby to shake off their Necks the yoke of Labour. And void of all Devotion, sting of Conscience, and the fear of God, are not asham'd when strong and able, to counterfeit Dis-temperers; and lay claim to privileges and exemptions from the Quire, Quests, Offices, and others burdens of Religion, due only to the disabl'd, infirm, and ancient Bre-

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thren.

*Set him to work, that he be not idle: For Idleness has taught much Naughtiness. Eccli. 23. 28. Stat. Gen.*

*c. 4. p. 8. The Obligation of Priests, Clerks, and Lay - Brothers in this point.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Colloq. 32.*

children. Such as these will have a dreadful Account to render of their Time idly spent, and of defrauding the Community of their service, of which they are Members. Our Holy Father says " These tepid and lukewarm Souls, that apply not themselves to familiar and humble Works, God will speedily cast out of his Mouth. Wherefore I will have all my Brethren to labour, and exercise themselves in humble and useful Occupations, that we may be less burdensome to the People, and prevent so many mischiefs of the Heart and Mouth, lest our Thoughts run astray in wickedly musing, or our Tongues in defaming our Neighbour.

O detestable Sloth! which art the cause of so many Mischiefs. I perfectly abhor thee from the bottom of my heart. O my Immortal Soul! whose property it is always to be in Motion, lively and sprightly, rouse up thy self, lose no longer thy precious Time, lay hold on all occasions which thy loving Lord lends thee for working thy Salvation: Leave off all thy superfluous Businesses, Toys, and Trifles, which are wholly Useless to thy eternal Happiness; and fall upon some heroic, honourable, virtuous Employments, such as thy Worth and Profession require of thee. Labour as thou woul'dst wish to have labour'd, on the Day wherein thy Hire shall be paid thee. Hasten thee, because thy Time is short, and the Reward great, and every degree of Glory which thou mayst deserve is Eternal; nor is it just to lose by slothfulness the Pleasure which will last for ever. O invisible God! Grant me so to live, as if I always saw thee; to the end, my Laziness may be quickn'd by thy divine Presence; shew thyself to me, as my true and living God, working in me such works as may bear witness who thou art, and bring me to enjoy thee my final Happiness.

§. II. *They extinguish not the spirit of holy Prayer, and Devotion.* ] By having their thoughts so taken up and bent

*The Spirit extinguish not.  
Theff. 5. 19.*

*Martha, Martha, thou art*

upon their Work, their corporal forces so exhausted therewith, and they so constant and assiduous at it, as to neglect the Quire, and Times appointed for Prayer, Meditation, and other exercises of Devotion, or to apply themselves to them perfunctoriously and by halves. *Wherein other Temporal*

*val*

real things ought to be subservient. } Yea, not only Temporal, but even the very Exercises of a Religious State, as Fasts, Watchings, going Bare-foot, Macerations of the Body, &c. All give place to holy Prayer and Devotion, as the Means to their End, and as the Accessory to the Principal: These being the most eminent, and most necessary of all others, and the very life and soul of a Religious Man.

Our Blessed Saviour having sent his Disciples to Preach, the sacred Text recounts, that they return'd full of joy, telling him, *That even the Devils were subject to them in his Name.* To whom our Saviour answer'd, *Rejoyce not, that you work Miracles, and that the Devils are subject to you; but rejoyce in this, that your Names are written in Heaven.* By which it is clear, that we ought to place all our joy and happiness in acquiring the kingdom of Heaven, for without that, all the rest is meer Nothing: *What will it avail a Man, to gain the whole World, if miserably he comes to loose his own Soul at last?* Now, if it be true, what our Saviour here says, that those Employments which tend to the Conversion of Souls, ought not to make us neglect what we owe to our own Salvation, since it were in vain to have contributed to the saving of all the World, if we do not labour to save Ourselves; may we not with far greater reason say the same of other Employments? Certainly it is inconsistent with good Sense, that a Religious Man should be so wholly taken up with his Study, or so carry'd away and distracted by any other worldly Employment, as to be deficient in his interior Duties belonging to his Salvation; neglecting Prayer, Meditation, spiritual Reading, Examen of conscience, &c. whereby Spiritual things would have the last and lowest place in his thoughts; to which he would afford only what remains, after he had dispatch'd all the rest of his Affairs; and in case

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careful, and art ironbl'd about many things: But one thing is Necessary. Mary has chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her. Luc. 10. 41.

Luce. 10.

17, 20.

The reasons which shew that Devotion and Prayer ought to take place of all other Employments. Math. 16. 26.

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he could not compass them all, would chuse rather to omit his Spiritual Duties, than be remiss in the others. For verily this were to live, not as a Religious Person, but like a Man; that had no gust nor feeling of Heavenly things. *They that fear our Lord, says Ecclesiasticus, will seek after the things that are well pleasing to him; and they that love him, shall be fill'd with his Law. They that fear our Lord, will prepare their Hearts, and in his sight will sanctify their Souls.*

*Eccli. 2. 19.*

He who trades in Jewels, had need have a good insight into their value, to prevent being over-reach'd in his Markets; otherwise he may happen, to sell a Stone of great value, at a very low rate. Our Traffick is in Precious Stones; *And we are all Merchants of the kingdom of Heaven, and seek for fine Pearls.* Wherefore we had need to understand very well the Merchandise we trade in, lest by a strange abuse, we give Gold for Dirt, and part with Heaven for Earth. *Let not the wise Man, says our Lord, by the mouth of the Prophet Jeremy, glory in his Wisdom; nor the strong Man in his Strength, nor the rich Man in the abundance of his Wealib; but let him that do's glory, glory in his Knowledge of me.* The chiefest of all Treasures consists in the knowledge, love, and service of God; this is our greatest, and indeed our only Affair; or to say better, it is for this we were created; for this we enter'd into Religion; and it is in this alone, we ought to seek our repose, as in our only end, and therein establish our greatest Glory. Infinite, it is this which we ought to have perpetually before our eyes. All other things in comparison of our advancement in Piety, ought only to be look'd upon as *Appendixes* thereunto, according to the words of our Saviour: *Seek in the first place the kingdom of God and his Justice; and all other things shall therewith be added to you.*

*Math. 13. 45.*

*Jerem. 9. 23.*

*Math. 6. 33.*

We read of some Fathers in the Desert, that not being able

able to apply themselves continually to Prayer or reading of Spiritual Books; and withall resolving not to spend any of their time Idly, they employ'd all the time they had to spare, in making Baskets of Palms, or some other Manual Works; and many of them, at the end of the Year, burnt what they had made, as having only labour'd to employ themselves, and avoid Idleness. So ought we to make what concerns the Service of God and our Spiritual Advancement, our chief Business, and apply ourselves to all our other Affairs, even to those which regard the Edification of our Neighbour, with the same spirit as these Holy Fathers did in making their Baskets; that is, without relenting the least in the world, in the Obligations we have to work out our own Salvation, and to aspire always to become more perfect in Divine Love. Let us then proceed upon this ground, and hold it for an infallible Maximé; That those Spiritual Exercises, namely Prayer and Meditation, which contribute to our advancement in Piety, must always be prefer'd before all other things whatever, and that we must never omit or neglect any of those Duties upon any account: For it is that which maintains us, and makes us improve in Vertue; and if once we come to neglect them, we shall quickly find ourselves at a loss. We have but too much Experience, that when our Interiour go's not as it ought, it proceeds from our growing Cold in our Devotions and Spiritual Exercises. *My Heart is wither'd within me, says the Psalmist, because I have forgot to eat my Bread.* If the food of our Souls be wanting, we must needs grow very feeble and languishing. Wherefore *S. Basil* says, We ought to be very faithful in giving to Almighty God the Time allotted for our Devotions; and as when it happens, that we have not had time to eat and sleep, having been oblig'd to Watch with a sick Person, and assist him to Dye well, we take great care immediately to refresh

Cap. l. 10.  
Iustit. c. 26

Pf. 101. 5

Serm. de re-  
nunt. sæculi, &  
Spiritu. perfec.

refresh our Wearied Bodies, and will be sure to find time for that: So in case we happen to be hinder'd to say our Prayers, make our Meditations, or examine our Consciences at the ordinary Hour, we must very ardently desire, to supply that Omission, and to acquit ourselves effectually of it, as soon as possibly we can.

What Devotion is, its Parts, and admirable Effects.

§. III. Now here observe, that this Devotion of which the Text makes mention, is properly a prompt and affectionate vivacity, or a readiness of Mind to those things which concern the Service of God, whose Parts are: Adoration, Thanks-giving, Oblation, Contrition, Mortification, Frequentation of Sacraments, Conformity of Will to the Divine Providence, the Zeal of Souls, Prayer, Meditation, Contemplation, and Union with God by knowledge, love, and imitation of his divine Perfections. Behold what is understood by the name of Devotion, which we are forbid to extinguish. This incomparable Vertue is deriv'd to us from the Father of Lights, to draw Man up from Earth to Heaven. It is the Art to make our Souls Divine. All which is here below, sinks by its proper weight, and leans downward towards natural Corruption. Our Spirit though it be Immortal, would follow the weight of our Bodies, were it not endu'd with this divine Vertue, which works the same effect in it, as the Adamant do's with Iron; for it pierces it and gives it life, together with a secret and powerful Spirit, from which all great Actions take their beginning. You shall never do any great matter, if the Honour of God, and the Reverence of holy things do not accompany your pretensions. Devotion is the Hinge, whereon all virtues move; the Mint, where all good resolutions are coin'd; and the Spring, from whence have their rise all the works of Mercy, both Corporal and Spiritual, which are so beneficial to Mankind.

O sweet and sacred devotion, the dear and only Darling of my

my Soul ! How tenderly do I love thee ? How ardently do I desire thee ? And yet how unworthy am I to enjoy thee ? O my Glorious Sovereign, the supreme cause of all Devotion, and original source of all Piety ! Thou art the only good, which my thirsty Soul incessantly gapes after ; thou art the solid support, and solace of her weakness and weariness, thou art the Dilater of all pious and devout Hearts, by the infusion of good desires into them. Take from me, I beseech thee, the love of the World, clear my thoughts from all distracting Objects, break the fetters which wrest my Affections to vanities, and fix them intirely upon thyself, my only amiable and satisfying Object. Thou, O immense Deity, the eternal, infinite, and essential Goodness ! deserv'st all perfect Homage and Honour, all possible Duty and Devotion from me, and all Rational Creatures ; who art in thyself so absolutely excellent and admirable, and to my Soul so highly bountiful and beneficial. I do therefore most humbly, freely, and sincerely consecrate the whole Residue of my life, to be totally employ'd in thy, holy Love and Service. O let me never swerve from this Resolution, let me be no more troubl'd, nor dejected in the faithful prosecution of such works as belong to my Duty, and thy divine Honour. Dilate my heart, O Lord ; with a holy Ghearfulness, and I will run on swiftly, sweetly, perseverantly in the strait Paths of thy Commandments.

S. IV. As for what concerns holy Prayer, (towit *Mental* which is that here chiefly intended by our Holy Founder, he having treated of *Vocal* in III. Chap. ) it is the principal and most effectual Means of that Heavenly Conversation, to which God calls us by the merits of his Passion, and by the effects of his triumphant Resurrection. It is the sacred business which Man has with God. It is the Mount Tabor, where an admirable Transfiguration is made of the Soul into God. It is the Spirit, which speaks to God, which powers itself on God. In conclusion, it is colour'd by God ; even as Jacob's Ew's did denote their burden to be of the same Colour, of which those Wands were that they stedfastly beheld. It is it, which the Apostle pleas'd to say : *Beholding the Glory of God, we are transfigur'd into the same Image, from brightness to brightness.*

The excellency of Mental Prayer.

Gen. 30. 32

2. Cor. 3. 18



*brighiness, as by the Spirit of God.* Prayer is the Conduit of grace. It is, as very well *S. Ephraim* has said, the Standard of our warfare, the Conservation of our peace, the Bridle of our impatience, the Guardian of temperance, the Seal of virginity, the Advocate of offenders, the Consolation of the afflicted, the Sepulture of the dying; for the Just are buried in Prayer, as the *Phoenix* in Perfumes.

Motives to  
excite us to  
the practice  
of it.

That which ought to incite us to this divine Exercise, is, first, the Necessity, which is so great, that in matter of Spiritual life it is as requisite to pray, as in the Animal to breath. We are choak'd with flesh and fat, and the flames of Concupiscence, unless we upon all occasions open our Mouths to take the gentle air of God. It is to little purpose to propose to you the Mysteries of Faith, and the Maximes of religious Perfection, if you use not Meditation to ruminate them. It is as Meat cast into a Stomach without digestion, which will do more hurt than good, not of its own nature, but by your indisposition, which is bad. From hence proceed the Desolations of the earth. From hence are deriv'd so many shameful Falls, Apostasies, Irregularities, Disorders, so many Miseries, so many Relaxations in religious Communities; for that they apply not themselves seriously to tast the things of God in Prayer, and to excite, warm, and inflame their Affections in Regular Observance, by the help of Meditation. In religion Prayer do's all. A Religious Man without Prayer, is a Bee without a Sting, who will neither make Hony nor Wax. He is both miserable and unprofitable, says *S. Bonaventure*, and carries before God a dead Soul in a live Body. For which cause, our Holy Father *S. Francis* affirm'd, that nothing was more to be desir'd by a Religious Man than the gift of Prayer; and knowing, that without it none would be able to do any great Matter in the Divine Service, he us'd all manner of ways possible to stir up his Brethren to the Practice of it.

Secondly,

*Vita cap. 10.*

Secondly, the Pleasure we therein take, in process of time, is verily that, which the Prophet *Isay* calls, *Sabbatum delicatum*, the delicate Sabbath; as much as to say, the delicious repose of the Soul. The Corporal Eye (as says the learned Prelate *William of Paris*) makes its Repast upon the beauty of the fields, the flowers, the heavens, the stars, and on all the objects, which are found in this Universe: But the Eye of Contemplation, by the means of Prayer, nourishes itself with the excellencies of God, and the perfections of *Iesus*. Thirdly, the Purity and Perfection of the Soul, which is deriv'd from this exercise, ought to serve us for a special Spur. There it is, says *Albertus Magnus*, where we carry our Mouths even to the source and well-spring of Virtue. There it is, where God is known, and knowing him that we love him, and in loving him we search him, in searching him we take pains, and in taking pains we find him. In the fourth place, we have the Example of our Saviour, who for our instruction spent the nights in Prayer; the Example of the Apostles, and all Saints, who have practis'd, and recommended this Exercise to us. It is no wonder then, if our Holy Founder be so very solicitous to have it preserv'd, and ordain that all Temporal things yield place thereto.

*Isai. 58. 13.*

*De Virt. cap. 27.*

O Spirit of God! which by reason of thy eminent Height can'st pray to no body, and yet by thy divine Wisdom mak'st all the world to pray to thee: Give me the gift of Prayer, since it is the Sanctuary for our evils, and the Fountain of all our goods. I confess to thee, O Gracious Sovereign, and Sanctifier of Souls! my great Misery, for which I stand in perpetual need of thy Mercy: And therefore I will Daily, and Hourly present myself before thee, as a poor and naked Beggar, as a weak, wounded and wicked Sinner; hoping, that thou (O pious Physician! wilt help and heal, pity and pardon, cure and comfort my sick, sinful, and sorrowful Soul. O that my Heart were absolutely purify'd from all undecent Affections! and that I might present

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my Prayers to thy Throne of Grace with all necessary circumstances, to obtain of thee what is most for thy Honour and Glory, and my Souls good!

§. V. But let us now leave Prayer, and return again to our Labour; which, next after our spiritual functions and exercises of Devotion, seems to our Holy Founder to be of so great Importance, that not content with what he says of it here in the Rule; but moreover, to imprint it deeper in our minds, he recommends it to us again very earnestly in his last Will and Testament in these words: "I myself wrought  
 „ with my Hands, and I will labour, and all the rest of my  
 „ Brethren, I absolutely will that thy work at such Work  
 „ as is decent and religious. And those that know not, let  
 „ them learn; not so much out of a desire to receive the Price  
 „ of their Labour, as to give good Example, and to avoid  
 „ Idleness. From both which Texts, I gather the following  
 conditions or motives of Manual Labour. 1. To work Faith-  
 fully. 2. To work Devoutly. 3. To work, to Edify  
 our Neighbour. 4. To shun Idleness. 5. To gain a Lively-  
 hood. All which, how it may be done with regard to a  
 Religious Calling, we will here briefly declare.

Test. S. P.

what it is to  
 work Faith-  
 fully.

First, we work Faithfully, when we use all diligence and care in the Task committed to our trust; when we stand to our word, and observe all the conditions agreed upon by those who employ us; when we work not to serve the Eye but to please God, from whom we expect our reward and not from Men, and are the same whether our Superiours be present or absent; when we use and put out our Strength which God has given us, and not spare our pains, nor excuse or withdraw ourselves upon every little pretext, shaking the Burthen off our own shoulders to put it upon our Brothers; when we come to our work in due time, follow it close whilst we are at it, and not leave it off before the time appointed.

§. VI.

What to  
work De-  
voutly.

§. VI. We work Devoutly, when we make our Intentions, and begin our work in the Name of God, implore his Assistance, and refer it to his Glory: When we offer it up in honour of some Saint, in memory of some mystery of the Life and Passion of our Saviour or of his Blessed Mother, to obtain grace to resist some Temptation, to exercise some Vertue, in acknowledgment of some Favour, in satisfaction for some Sin, and such like: We work Devoutly, if, during the time we are at it, we lift up our hearts and thoughts to God by some Ejaculatory Prayers and pious Affections; keep silence, refraining our tongues from vain and idle discourses; and minding only what we are about, we entertain ourselves with the well-beloved of our Hearts: We work Devoutly, when we make no distinction of Occupations, but are ready to undertake indifferently all whatsoever our Superiours shall think convenient, even the most base and vilest Offices of the House, out of a pure motive of Obedience, of Humility, of Charity, of Patience: And lastly, we work Devoutly, if, when we have done our best, we acknowledge ourselves unprofitable Servants, we offer our Work to be perfected, and beg pardon for our negligence and defects in the performance thereof.

§. VII. We also by Manual Labour give good Example and edify our Neighbour. For we therein imitate *Christ* and his Apostles, and so many holy Anchorets and Servants of God; witness Saint *Paul*, who in his Epistle to the *Thessalonians* speaks thus of himself, inviting them to follow his Example herein. For *Yourselves*, says he, *know how you ought to imitate us; for we have not been unquiet among you: Neither have we eaten the Bread of any Man gratis, but in labour and in toil Night and Day working, lest we should burden any of you. Not as though we had not Authority; but that we might give ourselves a Pattern to you*

Corporal Labour of great edification to our Neighbour.

2. *Thess.* 3. 7.

G g ij for

for to imitate us. For also when we were with you, this we denounc'd to you, that if any will not Work, neither let him Eat. For we have heard of certain among you that walk unquietly, working nothing, but curiously meddling. And to them that be such we denounce, and beseech them in our Lord Jesus-Christ, that working with silence, they eat their own Bread. Besides, by employing ourselves in Corporal Works, we shew that we willingly submit to, and approve the sentence of Labour, most justly inflicted by Almighty God; for the transgression of our first Parents, upon all Mankind. Again, we incite the Rich by our example, to take in hand some Exercise, wherewith to entertain themselves and pass their Time, and so avoid falling into the occasions of Drinking, Gaming, &c. We animate the Poor, by partaking with them of the labours and burdensom toils of a Needy Life. We encourage industrious Artizans, who more cheerfully embrace, and esteem their Callings more honourable; when they see them exercis'd by Religious Men. We gain the good will and affection of our Benefactors; who more freely bestow their Alms upon us, when they see us diligent and industrious in contributing to our own Livelyhood. In fine, we by this means ease Poor people, who live upon Begging as well as we. And at the same time stop the Mouths of prophane and antimonastical Libertines, who make it their business to decry, calumniate, and represent us to the world, as so many idle Drones, unprofitable and burdensom Members to the Common-wealth, Men seeking our ease, fattening ourselves and abounding in delights, masks of Hypocrisy, unworthy of the priviledges and exemptions of Princes, and of the charities of the People.

Beneficial to  
the Soul.

§. VIII. Moreover, by working we exclude Idleness, which is a matter of very great importance to Religious Men above all others; Sloth (as we said) being the greatest Enemy  
of

of man's Salvation, and obstacle in the way of Vertue; and therefore carefully to be avoided, and all possible Endeavours us'd to well-husband our Time, by taking in hand some good Employment. One would not believe, how much the earnestness some have upon a good piece of Work diverts all other Passions, which may embroil the Spirit: And whosoever will make trial, shall find, that Innocency is never better lodg'd, than at the Sign of Labour, which made the old Hermit to say: He that is Employ'd is tempted but by one Devil, but he that is Idle is tempted by them all. And to speak truth, what Temptation is not the Idle Man expos'd to? What Sin is he not capable of committing? Is there in a Community (which God forbid) an unchast and wanton Person? It is he. Is there a Drunkard, or a Glutton? It is he. Is there a Tale-bearer, a Murmurer, a Whisperer, a Wrangler, a Calumniator, a Censurer of his Brethren? It is he. Is there any one irregular, tepid, luke-warm, comes late to acts of Community, irreverent at Divine Service? It is he. Any one uneasy, fickle, inconstant, unquiet, gadding abroad, and acquainted with all the world? It is he. The Idle man cannot be confin'd to any Place, you find him one while in the Cloister, another while in the Garden, then in the Speak-house, afterward in the Guest-Chamber, Refectory, Infirmary, and every where but in his Cell, which is a meer Prison to him. He is always shifting and changing, and proposes to himself many things, but effects nothing. And this is his Life, till Death comes to call upon him; and then what may be expected, but Confusion, but Remorse, but Shame, which oftentimes drags after it an eternity of Pain.

O eternal God! by whose just sentence the Slothful and Faint-hearted perish'd in the Desert, without entering into the Land flowing with Milk and Honey, which thou hadst promis'd them

*Deut. 1. 35*

for

for a Reward of their Labour. I confess that for my negligence and sloth I deserve to be cast out of thy House, this holy Religion; to be excluded from thy Kingdom, and being bound hand and foot to be thrown down into utter Darkness. But, Lord, spare me for thy Mercy's sake; and grant I most humbly beseech thee, that hereafter I may Faithfully, and Devoutly labour in thy holy Service; and in such manner run my Course, that I gain a Crown, and enter into the Land of eternal Promise.

Profitable to  
the Body.

§. IX. Lastly, by the means of Manual Exercise we gain an honest Livelyhood; which is commendable and well-becoming Religious Men, after the example of Saints, as we have already seen. But how it is to be practis'd by *Frier-Minors*, with regard to their Hire, or their being satisfy'd for their Work without prejudice to their Poverty, our Holy Founder shews, when in the following Text he subjoyns.

*The Work-man  
is worthy of  
his Hire. Luc.  
10. 7.*

*Our Lord ordain'd for  
them that  
preach the Gospel,  
to live of  
the Gospel.*

*1. Cor. 9. 14.  
The Conditions  
with  
which we are  
to receive  
the Price of  
our Labour.*

*And for the Reward of their Labour, for themselves and their Brethren, let them receive Necessary things.]* Necessary, not Superfluous, Pretious, or Curious. *For the Body.]* Such as are, Meat, Drink, Lodging, Clothes, Books, and whatever else is requisite for the maintenance of their State, within the bounds of our Poverty. *Except Coin or Money.]* Which yet may be put into the Syndick's hands for the Brethrens use, after the manner declar'd in the precedent Chapter: To which they may have recourse as to other Pecuniary Alms, for supplying their real Necessities, past, present, or imminent; but no other ways. *And this with Humility, as becomes the Servants of God.]* Who seeking chiefly the glory of their Celestial Father in what they do, and the kingdom of Heaven, aspire more after Eternals than Temporals. And for that reason are easily contented with what is bestow'd on them in consideration of their Labour; and receive it with Humility and Gratitude, be it more or less according to the good pleasure of their Masters for whom they work, without claiming any the least thing as their Due upon that account; resting

resting assur'd, that if Man do's not sufficiently reward them, God will. *And followers of most Holy Poverty.*] As Persons uncapable of all right and title to any Temporal thing whatever, which they have abandon'd for God's sake. And therefore not rigorously bargaining for the price of their Labour; much less exacting it as their Due; but receiving it purely as an Almes, with Humility and Thanks; so serving their Masters *Gratis*, and taking their Hire as Children of Gratitude, and as partakers of the works of Christian Piety; whatever obligation their Masters, for whom they labour, may have on their parts of Natural Recompence, or Right of making the Brethren amends for their Pains.

O my God! I renounce all Requital of Men for my Works, since my Redeemer receiv'd of them no other Wages, but base Ingratitude, and most grievous Torments in return of his.

§. X. Observe, this Labour of which it is lawful for us to receive the recompence for the supply of our corporal Necessities, is twofold, Spiritual and Corporal. Spiritual Labour is that of Studying, Preaching, Catechizing, reading the Office, saying Mass, hearing Confessions, visiting the Sick, &c. which is proper to Ecclesiastical Men, and much better becomes them than any Mechanick Exercise whatsoever: Which therefore is not here absolutely requir'd of them, but upon condition only, and in defect of the other, that is, inasmuch as may be requisite to avoid Idleness, or necessary to gain a Livelihood. For as Pope *Nicolas III.* says in his *Declaration*: According to the example of *Christ* and his Saints, Spiritual Labour is so much the more esteem'd than Corporal, by how much the things of the *Soul* are of greater price than those of the *Body*. By Corporal Labour is understood all Mechanick exercise, or Manual occupation, as Painting, Sowing, Gardening, Watch-making, Basket-making, Carpentry, Masonry, Turning, Joining, &c. Among

Labour twofold corporal and Spiritual.

Spiritual Labour preferable to corporal.

Nic. III.  
art. 8.



mong which Exercises, that is to be preferr'd which has least noise, incumbrance and distraction, is most decent and modest, and most proper to maintain the reputation and authority of Ecclesiastical Persons, and the majesty of the Church. And therefore according to *S. Bonaventure*, that Labour is most pleasing to our Holy Founder, which perfectly excludes Idleness, which most advantageously nourishes and entertains Devotion, and which after the most commendable and most religious manner furnishes the Brethren with Necessaries for life.

But Corporal  
Labour pre-  
ferrable to  
Begging.

§. XI. Observe again, that the way of providing our Necessities by honest Labour, is better and more perfect than Begging from door to door; it being more suitable to our Rule, and more conform to Holy Scriptures, and to the Practice of the Ancient Fathers. It is also less subject to distractions and dissipation of Mind, less chargeable to the Publick, and more free from the importunities of the People; and therefore preferable of the two by Religious Persons, who by their Profession, are oblig'd to seek the kingdom of Heaven and its Justice above all things in the world with the least dissipation of Spirit they are able, to which Begging is much more expos'd than Working. That this is the meaning of our Holy Founder, may be gather'd from his *Testament*, where he says: "When the price of our Labour, was not given us, we had recourse to our Lord's Table, begging from door to door: As if he should say, we had not recourse to the Table of our Lord by Begging, so long as we could get necessities by Working: Answerable to the custom and practice of the Ancient Anchorets, who got their living by Writing, making Cords, Baskets, Mats, &c. The Divine Scriptures likewise greatly approve, and recommend to us Corporal Labour. *Because thou wilt eat of the work of thy Hands, thou art Happy, and it shall*

*Test. S. P.*

*Ps. 127. 2.*

# 4. XI.

## *Their Labourers.*

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*be well wish thee. And S. Paul to the Thessalonians : We entreat you, my Brethren, to profit more and more, and to endeavour to be peaceful; and that attending your Affairs, you take pains with your Hands, as we have appointed you, that you by your conversation may edify those who are none of ours, and that you may need nothing.*

1. Thess. 4. 11.

Yet we must own, and it is here to be taken notice of, that our Ordinary Quests, such as are now in use, are not properly down right Beggings, but humble and modest Petitions of the price of our Labour, render'd to the Publick in Praying, hearing Confessions, assisting the Sick, Preaching, &c. which are so far from being to be neglected, that they ought to be entertain'd and cultivated by us; as annex'd to our Profession, and the greatest Ornament of our Order. For seeing we are incapable of possessing any thing as our Own, all we have we must receive from others in the quality of Beggars, and by way of Almes in one kind or other; either as freely Offer'd, or as the price of our Labour, or by Begging from door to door, or by having Recourse to Spiritual Friends; which are the four Means assign'd us by our Rule, as was said, for supplying our Corporal Necessities. Only care must be taken, to refrain from incommodious Begging, such as is prejudicial to the exercise of holy Prayer and Devotion; that is, such as is attended with too great Sollicitude, with overmuch Importunity of Benefactors, too great Toils in running up and down, and too long Absence from the Community. All which is no small obstacle to religious Perfection and recollection of Mind, and would distract us much more than the possession and management of Temporal Estates; which, for that very reason our Holy Founder has taken from us; and therefore cannot be pleasing to him; who as he do's not allow of Study, or Manual Labour to that degree as to extinguish the

*If we have so-  
w'd to you Spi-  
ritual things, is  
it a great mat-  
ter if we reap  
your Carnal  
things? 1. Cor.  
9. 11.*

Four ways of  
supplying  
our Corporal  
Necessities.

what kind of  
Begging is  
most conform  
to the inten-  
tion of our  
Holy Found-  
er.

H h

Spirit

Importunate  
Begging o-  
dious to God  
and Man.  
In *Q. Q.* super  
Reg. 9. 6.

Spirit of Devotion, so much less of this kind of Begging. Besides, such Importunate Craving, is as it were, a sort of extortion of Almes from the People, which must needs render us Odious. And is the cause, says *S. Bonaventure*, that Men, when they see us come a Questing, endeavour to shun us, as one would do Thieves or High-way Men. Moreover it deprives us of that Liberty, which is altogether necessary for the due performance of our spiritual functions of Preaching and hearing Confessions; as if therein we sought our own Ends, more than the Salvation of Souls. From whence also it comes, that we lose the esteem and veneration of the Faithful; that the Splendor of the Order is offuscated, our Evangelical Poverty vilify'd, Devout People scandaliz'd, our Friends confounded with shame, the Poor defrauded, Benefactors depriv'd of their Merit, by bestowing their Alms with an ill will, as being in a manner forc'd thereto by our Importunity. In fine, our own Brethren the Questors, lose Patience as well as Devotion, and are diversly expos'd to the gibes, scoffs, and perverse judgments of Libertines and prophane Men. And all this we get by our indiscreet Begging, contrary to our Holy Founder's intention; who, to take from us the Occasion thereof, very prudently advises us to be ever content with Moderate things, and to ask only of our Benefactors what is just necessary for Food and Raiment; and that too, when it cannot be had by Charities freely offer'd, or by Labour corporal or spiritual. And for our better Instruction in the present case speaks of himself in the following manner: "As for my own part, says he, I can safely say, and I give God thanks for it, I never was a Thief or Robber of Almes; for I always took less than I had occasion for, lest other Poor should be defrauded thereby, and to do otherwise I ever look'd upon it as down right Theft. Would to God! these words were deeply engraven

*Opus. Tom. 3.*  
*Apoth. 41.*

engraven in the Hearts and Mouths of all *Frier-Minors*; which are so conform to those of *Ecclesiastics*. *The Bread of the Needy, is the Life of the Poor: He that defrauds it, is a Man of blood.*

*Eccli. 34. 25.*

Wherefore my Dear Brethren, let us take care we be not guilty of so great a Crime, by begging Superfluous Alms and importuning Benefactors for the pampering our stinking Carcasses. But let us content ourselves with poor and moderate things, for what regards the Necessities of nature in Meat, Drink, Clothes and Lodging, as our sublime Poverty and austere penitential State, according to the Holy Fathers and Expositors of our Rule, require of us under strict obligation of Conscience. And therefore among other Conclusions upon this matter, which the learned General *Bona-gratia* sets down, this is one, Towit, that a *Frier-Minor*, strong and lusty, leading an idle and voluptuous Life, lives in the state of Mortal Sin, and a continual Subject of the anger of God; because, says he, such a Course of life is expressly forbidden all Religious Persons, especially *Mendicants* by their Profession and state of Penance, to which it is directly opposite, and wholly destructive; it inciting them to the said importunate and immoderate Begging to maintain it: Which on one side, deprives them of the exercise of Prayer, Contemplation, Silence, Solitude, Retirement, which are the proper Instruments of Vertue and religious Perfection; and on the other, sets open the Gate to innumerable sins and transgressions both of the Law of God and their Institutes, to which it exposes our *Questors*; such as are Impatience, Murnfuring, Diffidence in Gods providence, Pusillanimity, continual Sollicitude, Vexation of mind, Gadding abroad, Distractions, Lyes, Hypocrisy, Flattery, Thefts, Extortions, Hardness of heart, Riots, Prodigalities, and the like, which intirely destroy all Religion, and precipitate

A.F.M. bound to mortify his Sensuality, and to avoid superfluous Begging, the cause of to many Mischiefs.

Supplem.  
ff. ff. 8.

Hh ij      pitate

pitate men into the bottom of the Abyss. Let us then stand to this Resolution, and say, that a *Frier-Minor*, is strictly bound in Conscience to use means to mortify his Sensuality, and prescribe just limits to his irregular Appetites, to suppress all Superfluity, Curiosity, Niceness in his manner of living, and be content with the use of Moderate things, with coarse Garments, poor and ordinary Fare, mean Edifices, and with all other things belonging to a Poor Man's calling; so to avoid the occasion of immoderate and incommodious Begging, which is to him the cause of so many Sins against the Law of God and his Rule.

*Eccli. 18. 30.*

O my Soul! here enter into thyself, and reflect on thy vow of Poverty, which thou hast made to the most High and Mighty God, and never violate it in favour of thy rotten stinking Body. Remember thyself of the saying of the Wise Man: *Go not after thy Concupiscences, and turn away from thy Will. If thou give to thy Soul her Concupiscences, she will make thee a joy to thine Enemies. What greater joy and satisfaction to the Devil than to see thee, after thou hast abandon'd thine own Goods, with so much eagerness to hunt after other Peoples, to cheat and impose upon Benefactors, to maintain thy Sensuality at the price of the Blood of the Poor, to play the Beggar abroad and the Prodigal at home, and commit a multitude of other Sins against the Law of God and thy Rule, occasion'd by undue, superfluous and unnecessary Begging? Take away then the Cause, and the Effect will cease.*

All things  
invite us  
to Labour.

*Gen. 3. 19.*

§- XII. I now conclude this Treatise of Labour with an Observation well worthy to be ponder'd by us, which is, that the World was yet in her Cradle, and Man was no more than born, when God made a place of Justice of terrestrial Paradise, pronounc'd against him the sentence of Labour, and afterward wrote it as with his finger in the sweat of his Brow, saying to him; *In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth, from whence thou wast taken.* There are in Religion as well as in the World, who perpetually appeal from this Sentence, as if

if they were not Mortal Men. It seems Labour is not for them; let Nature hold to the chain and labour those Grosser Bodies, which are moulded of the clay of *Adam*; they have forsooth Bodies compos'd of I know not what kind of Starry Matter, which never must sweat, nor take pains, but at some Pastime or Recreation. What a folly it is? Ought not he to be dissolv'd into Sweat, since he is to be reduc'd into Ashes? He cannot free himself from the sentence of Death, and why shall he decline Pains-taking; seeing it proceeded from one and the same Mouth, in the same Time, and upon one and the same Subject? No man is too great, too noble to have an Occupation, were he an Emperour. If Iron had reason, it would choose rather to be us'd in Labour, than to grow rusty in a Corner. We find that in all things we must use endeavour, and that we came into the world as into a *Galley*, where if one cannot manage either the Stern or Oar, he must at the least make a shew to stir his Armes: For to live and take pains, is but one and the same thing; and that, which the Nourishment we take, operates for the preservation of life, Labour do's the like for the accommodation thereof.

Nothing is idle in Nature. Behold the indefatigable course of the Sun, Moon, and Stars: Behold the ceaseless motion and agitation of the Elements: Behold the Birds in the air, the Fishes in the water, the Animals, Trees, Shrubs, Plants, Herbs upon the earth; all taken up in the faithful performance of the Task impos'd upon them by their Creator. Behold among Mankind, Magistrates, Judges, Artizans, Marchants, Husbandmen, &c. every one busy in their respective Employments. And would you be the only Drone, the only Sluggard in the world? You, who are a Religious Man bound by so many ties to tend to Perfection, to produce works worthy of your Vocation, worthy of Penance, worthy  
of

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Apoth. 15.*

of Eternal Life ? What a sight is it to see you wander up and down the House with your hands in your sleeves, telling your Tale, laughing, sporting, eating, drinking, sleeping ? You, who are such, hear what our Holy Founder says to you : " Go thy ways, Brother *Fly*, for thou wilt eat the sweat and pains of thy Brethren, and play the Loiterer amongst the works of God, like the Drone, an idle and fruitless Bee, that neither labours nor takes pains to make either Wax or Honey, but lives upon and consumes the labour and gain of the industrious and laborious Bees. What reproach, to let slip so many golden Harvests, that are daily and hourly presented to you in Religion ? To squander away the most flourishing part of your Life, which you ought to dedicate to Vertue, and to the service of the Publick, to pass it over in Trifles and idle Toies ? Harken to the voice of the Wise Man : *How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard ? When wilt thou rise out of thy Sleep ? Go to the Emmos, and consider her ways, and learn wisdom : Who having no Guide, nor Master, nor Captain, prepares meat for herself in the Summer, and gathers in the Harvest for to eat.* The Remedies for these Disorders are.

Remedies  
against  
Idleness.

1. To consider, how many Damn'd Souls do now groan in flames, which all the Oceans cannot extinguish, for having contemn'd Time, which you yet enjoy at your ease. He, that could only grant to them one little moment of those excellent Days, which you prodigally waste, through what Thorns, what Fire, what Ice would they not pass, to expiate the Errors of their pass'd life ? What Scepters, what Empires, what Diadems, would they not voluntarily and freely despoil themselves of, to purchase one hour of Time, and employ it in the rigors of a most austere Penance ? Yet you suppose it may be lawful for you to live in this childish Stupidity.

2. Con-

2. Consider, that the Favours of God are so many Chains; if they bind us not to our Duty, they will bind us to the Punishment due for that neglect. Our Soul is given us by God, as a thing borrow'd from Heaven, we must not be too Prodigal of it. We must dig up ill Roots, as we do in Land cultivated. The time will come, that we must render up the Fruits, in proportion to what we have receiv'd; and shall we then present Thorns? Examine therefore well your Accounts whilst occasion favours you, and take so much pain to avoid an eternal Unhappiness, as to raise to yourself a little Treasure out of the thrift of Time, by taking every Day, be it never so little, leisure to retire yourself within yourself, to behold from whence you come, and whither you go, and what passes within you. Study in the book of your Conscience, which must be laid open, and perhaps sooner than you think.

3. Consider, that the Sun, this goodly great Star, which makes you begin the course of this Day, will this Day run about ten or twelve millions of Leagues; and you, how many Steps will you make towards Vertue? This unwearied Harbinger is gone to take you up a lodging in the Grave; each Minute is so much deducted from your Life. Will you not follow the counsel of the Son of God, and work while it is Day? A long Night will shortly cover you with its wings, in which you will not have power to work.

4. Suppose every Day, a day of Harvest; suppose it a Market-day; suppose it a day, wherein you are to work in a Golden Mine; suppose it a Ring, which you are to engrave and enamel with your Actions, to be at night presented on God's Altar.

5. Set before you the excellent consideration of *S. Bernard*, that your Actions in passing, pass not away; for every good work is a grain of Seed for eternal Life. Say with the famous Painter *Xenoxes*: *Æteritati pingo, I paint for Eternity.*

6. Fol-



6. Follow the counsel of *Thomas Aquinas*, do every Action in the name of *Iesus-Christ*, desiring to have the approbation and good affections of all the Church, Militant and Triumphant. Do it, as if the glory of God, the well-fare of all the world, and your whole Salvation depended on it, and as if that were to set the Seal to all your works.

These Considerations, if you weigh them well, will never permit you to be Idle, but make you set a just value upon all the moments of your Life, and like a good Husband to manage the Exchequer of God as it appertains to a Religious Man, in exercising yourself perpetually in some profitable employment, either Corporal or Spiritual, whereby to purchase an Everlasting Happiness.

O precious Moment whereon depends Eternity ! O Eternity which depends on this Moment ! How important are you ? How worthy our most serious Considerations ? Methinks no manner of Labour should seem difficult, uneasy or toilsom to a Christian, since he thereby may gain Everlasting Glory. Wherefore O my Soul, watch in Prayer, and in the continual Exercise of good works; and if thou chance through lukewarmness to sleep, awake thy self presently, lest thou come to be surpriz'd, and Night overtake thee ere thou art aware. O Redeemer of the world ! Help me, I beseech thee, and push me on to my Duty, that I may let no Day pass without doing somewhat for my Salvation, since it displeases thee that I remain any Moment Idle; that so Death finding me piously exercis'd, thou mayst admit me into thy Heavenly Kingdom.



That



That the Brethren appropriate Nothing to themselves ; and of asking Alms ;  
and of the Sick Brethren.

## CHAP. VI.

*Let the Brethren appropriate Nothing to themselves , neither House , nor Place , nor any Thing : But as Pilgrims and Strangers in this World , serving our Lord in Poverty and Humility , go confidently for Alms. Neither must they be Asham'd ; because our Lord made himself Poor for us in this World. This is that Height of the most high Poverty , which has instituted you , my Dear Brethren , Heirs and Kings of the kingdom of Heaven. It has made you poor in Substance , but exalted you in Vertue. Let this be your Portion , which leads you into the land of the Living : Whereon , my Dearest Brethren , intirely relying , you will never desire to have any other Thing under Heaven , for the Name of our Lord JESUS-CHRIST. And wheresoever the Brethren be and shall meet one another , let them shew themselves one to-wards the other as Domesticks , and every one securely manifest to each other his Necessity, For if a Mother do's nourish , and love her Carnal Son ; how much more tenderly ought a Man to love , and nourish his Spiritual Brother ? And if any of them shall fall into any Infir- mity , the other Brethren ought to serve him , as they Themselves would be serv'd.*

## THE CONTENTS.

- I. The Reasons or Motives of Franciscan Poverty; and wherein it consists.
- II. That we are depriv'd thereby, not of the Natural right and use of Temporal things, but of the Civil or Politick.
- III. It excludes whatever is Superstitious, Curious and Precious, or that savours of Plenty and the Spirit of Hoarding.
- IV. It disables us from making Civil Contracts of any kind whatsoever.
- V. But allows us Spiritual Rights.
- VI. It is fitly represented by the similitude of Pilgrims and Strangers, whose properties are here describ'd.
- VII. Holy Poverty recommended by the Example of our Saviour.
- VIII. And therefore we ought not to be Asham'd of it, but go confidently a Begging.
- IX. Of the Sublimity of our Seraphical Poverty, and the Advantages thereof.
- X. Of the Familiarity and Affection of the Brethren towards each other.
- XI. That they are oblig'd to serve one another in time of Sicknes; as they Themselves do desire, when Sick, to be serv'd,
- XII. A word of Advice to the Sick Brethren.

## THE EXPOSITION.

Math. 6.

The Reasons  
which move  
FF. MM. to  
abandon all  
worldly  
Goods.

S. I. **H** Eap not up to yourselves Treasures on the Earth; where the Rust and Moth do corrupt, and where Thieves dig through and steal. But heap up to yourselves Treasures in Heaven; where neither the Rust nor Moth do's corrupt, and where Thieves do not dig through nor steal. For where thy Treasure is, there is thy Heart also.

**N** O Man can serve two Masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon.

Therefore

Therefore I say to you, be not careful for your Life, what you shall eat; neither for your Body, what Raiment you shall put on. Is not the Life more than the Meat, and the Body more than the Raiment? Behold the Fowls of the air, that they sow not, neither reap, nor gather into Barns; and your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you much more of price than they? And which of you by caring, can add to his stature one cubit? And for Raiment why are you careful? Consider the Lillies of the field how they grow: They labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, neither Salomon in all his Glory was array'd as one of these. And if the Grass of the field, which to Day is, and to Morrow is cast into the Oven, God do's so clothe: How much more you, O ye of very small Faith? Be not careful therefore, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be cover'd? For all these things the Heathens do seek after. For your Father knows that you need all these things. Seek therefore first the kingdom of God, and his Justice: And all these things shall be given you besides. Says the Saviour of the world.

Behold here, Dear Brethren, that Divine Doctrine, which raises the Sons of Adam from the slime of the Earth, to place them near the Angels in Heaven; and instead of the Terrestrial Paradise which they lost, shews them the means to arrive at the Celestial. These are those charming and Life-giving words, which have fill'd Cloisters with *Friers* and *Monks*, and the Deserts with holy *Anchoress*. Why do we delay to follow their Examples, and not presently put ourselves under the happy Course of God's disposition for all that shall happen to us? His careful Eye watches over such as put their Trust in him. It is for them that his Hands have treasures, and the very Deserts possess abundance. What have we to do with Moles, and dig the earth like them, there to

hide Treasures? Is there need of so great Covetousness in Life, to encounter with such extream Nakedness in Death? We have neither the souls of Giants; nor the bodies of Whales. And to whom do we trust the safety of our Treasures? To Rust, to Mobs, and Thieves. Were it not better we should in our Infirmities depend only upon God Almighty, and comfort our Poverty in him, who is only Rich, and so carry our Souls to Heaven, where *Jesus* on the day of his Ascension did place our Sovereign Good? Only Serpents and Covetous men desire to sleep among Treasures, as *S. Clement* says: But the greatest Riches of the world is Poverty, free from Covetousness. For these reasons,

The Sum of  
Franciscan  
Poverty.

*Let the Brethren.* ] Of what rank, condition, or dignity soever they be, whether Superiours or Inferiours. *Appropriate Nothing to themselves.* ] Neither any Thing, nor the Use of any thing; neither in Common, nor in Particular; as Lords, Masters, Proprietors and Owners thereof. *Neither House.* ] Churches, Convents, Cells, or other Edifice. *Nor Place.* ] Lands, Grounds, Orchards, Gardens, Vineyards, &c. *Nor any Thing.* ] Moveable; as Goods, Cattel, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, Books, or any other Temporal thing what ever under the copes of Heaven.

Conform to  
the example  
of our Blef-  
sed Saviour.  
*Nic. III. a. 2.*

Lo here a perfect Disinheriting of ourselves, forsaking all worldly Goods for God's sake, purely with intention to serve him with greater freedom. Which is Holy, and Meritorious, says Pope *Nicolas* in his *Declaration* upon the Rule. And which, *Christ Jesus* our Lord and Master, shewing to Mankind the way of Perfection, has taught by Word, and confirm'd by Example, and which his Apostles and prime Disciples have likewise practis'd. According to the Counsel which himself gave to the Young Man in the Gospel, when he said:

*If thou wilt be Perfect, go, sell the things that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven.*

*Math. 19. 21.*

*ven, and come, follow me.* Follow him, says *S. Anselm*, who was so needy, that coming into the world, he was born not in his own, but in another man's House; so needy, that being born, was plac'd for want of room in a Manger of brute Beasts; so needy, that living in the world, he had not where to lay his Head to rest; nor dying, wherewith to cover his Nakedness; nor being dead, a Winding-sheet to wrap up his Body, nor a Sepulchre of his own to bury it in. And this is the Pattern which we pretend to follow; this is the Poverty which we make profession of. Behold a *Frier-Minor's* Treasure, his Lands and Livings, his rich Possessions. This is his Portion, holy Poverty, that Evangelical *Pearl*, which purchases for him the whole World; otherways call'd *S. Francis's* Wallet; a bottomless Poke, the more you take out, the more you find in. For though in reality it be Nothing, *Fratres Nihil sibi appropriant*; yet through the Blessing of God, it furnishes us to admiration with all things we stand in need of. So that we can say in very truth with the Apostle *S. Paul*; *Nihil habentes, & Omnia possidentes*, Having nothing of our own by Right, we possess all things by other people's Favour.

*S. Anselm. de Sacram.*

*2. Cor. 6. 10.*

But what wonder is it, that we are so well provided for; since the world's Redeemer, the Lord of heaven and earth, has himself taken us under his Protection? You shall hear what assurance he gives us hereof, in his own words to our Holy Founder, couch'd in the *Annals* of the Order after the following manner. "I will be their Portion and Inheritance; „ I will not they embarrass themselves with the care of „ worldly Goods. I myself will be the Oeconomist, Pro- „ curator, and Steward of all the Brethren of this Society. „ So long as they observe their Rule, nothing that they „ stand in need of, shall be wanting to them. How much „ greater their Number shall be, so much the greater shall

The Providence of God over the Order of Saint Francis.

*Annal. Tom. 1. an. 1223. n. 10.*

my.

*Annal. Tom. 9.  
an. 1439. N. 39.*

„ my Providence be over them. And whilst they shall put  
 „ their Trust in me, I will be sure to maintain them, nor  
 „ will I abandon them for ever. And again to *Albertus*  
*Sartianensis*, another of his Servants of this Order, upon a  
 certain occasion he speaks thus: " Brother *Albert*, thou  
 „ hast no reason to be diffident of the divine Mercy and Pro-  
 „ vidence. I am he, who promis'd to my servant *Francis*  
 „ all opportune and necessary Relief, for him and his. Neither  
 „ hast thou hitherto in this Religion seen any Brother aban-  
 „ don'd and forsaken in his Necessities, or to have perish'd  
 „ with Hunger. In such manner, that we *Frier-Minors*  
 may make the very same Answer, which the Apostles did  
 to our blessed Saviour, when he ask'd them saying: *When*  
*I sent you without Purse, and Scrip, and Shoes; lack'd*  
*ye any thing? And they said; Nothing.*

*Luc. 22. 35.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Parab. 1.*

Of this our Saviour's tender and loving Providence over his  
 Order our Blessed Founder was divinely assur'd, when, to  
 Pope *Innocent III.* ( to whom at first the Rule of the  
*Frier-Minors* seem'd too hard to be observ'd, and that it  
 was impossible for the Professors of so strict Poverty to be  
 sufficiently supply'd, being in so great number, with Meat,  
 Drink, Clothes, and other Necessaries ) he reply'd after  
 the following manner. " Most Holy Father, there is no fear,  
 „ that the Children and Heirs of the eternal King, who by  
 „ the vertue of the *Holy Ghost* are born of a poor Mother.  
 „ after the image and likeness of *Christ*, their King and Fa-  
 „ ther, should perish with hunger; but being train'd up in  
 „ a poor Religion by the spirit of Poverty, his beloved  
 „ Spouse, will without doubt be plentifully maintain'd. For  
 „ if the King of Heaven so liberally promises to his Follo-  
 „ wers an Everlasting Kingdom; how will he not rather  
 „ furnish them with those things, which he equally be-  
 „ stows on the good and the bad?

O most

O most Merciful and loving Father ! We render thee millions of thanks for the care which thou hast of thy Servants, protecting and sustaining all such as put their Trust in thee. Thou didst not content thy self to stop the Mouths of the hungry Lions, that they might not eat and devour thy Servant, but also took'st Meat from the Reapers to give him whereof to eat. Thou drew'st Water from a Rock, Honey out of a Stone, and Oil forth of a hard Wall. Thou sent'st Quails from the skies, thou rain'd'st down *Manna* from heaven. And in the hands of the hungry didst multiply Bread and Fishes : To the end that thy Children may know, that not only the Fruits of the earth, but thine Omnipotent Hand sustains such as confide in thee. Blessed be this thy loving Providence, and let Angels and Men, and all Creatures of the Universe laud and praise thee for the same. *Let the Mercies of our Lord Confess to him, and his Marvellous Works to the Children of Men; because he has fill'd the empty soul, and the hungry soul he has fill'd with good things.* Augment, dear Lord, we beseech thee, this faith and confidence in thy holy Providence, in the hearts of all *Frier-Minors*; that thereby performing what they have promis'd to thee, they may find by experience what thou promisest them, *Seek first the kingdom of God, and the rest shall be given to you.* With this sweet Promise, O my loving Master, I comfort my self, and will rest securely thereon. It shall be my principal Sowing and my Reaping, it shall be my Barn and my Garner, since without the same all my Sollicitudes shall be in vain. For if with so great care thou givest food to Dogs, with how much greater wilt thou give it to thy Sons ? If thou satisfy'st the hunger of wild Beasts, how wilt thou not satisfy the hunger of Men ? And if thou takest care of Sinners who offend thee, how much greater wilt thou not have of the Just that love and serve thee ?

Dan. 14.

Deut. 32.

Ps. 77.

Math. 14.

Ps. 106.

Math. 6.

But to give my Reader a more clear and exact Notion of our *Franciscan* Poverty, and distinguish it from that of other Orders, it will be necessary we here take notice, That there are three sorts of Renunciation of temporal goods; which are more or less Perfect, according to their different Degrees.

The first Degree is of those, who living in the world retain to themselves the Propriety and Dominion of all they possess,

Three kinds of Renunciation.



possess, as Money, Lands, Houses, Goods, Cattel, &c. yet free from all Covetousness, and without setting their Affections upon their Treasures; but using them according to Religion and Justice, and out of Devotion giving part of them to supply the wants of the Poor, as occasion requires. And these are the poor in Spirit, though rich in Substance, who follow the counsel of the Royal Prophet : *If Riches abound, set not your Heart upon them.* And of whom it is said in another Psalm : *He distributed, he gave to the Poor; his Justice remains for ever and ever, his Horn shall be exalted in glory.*

The second Degree belongs to those, who in Particular, and as to their own Persons renounce all Temporal goods for God's sake, but retain the Dominion and Propriety thereof in Common, and as to what relates to the Body whereof they are Members; having one common Stock, out of which all their Necessities are supply'd, according to the exigency of each one. After the Example of the first Christians, of whom the *Acts* of the Apostles make mention in these words : *All they that believ'd, were together, and had all things Common. Their possessions and substance they sold, and divided them to all, according as every one had need.* And again : *Neither was there any one needy among them. For as many as were owners of Lands or Houses, sold and brought the price of those things which they sold, and laid it before the feet of the Apostles. And to every one was divided according as every one had need.* And this is the Poverty of all those Religious Orders, that now adays possess any thing in Common; whose first Founders, in imitation of these Christians of the Primitive times, have introduc'd and caus'd to revive again in the Church, this second Degree of Abdication; obliging their Followers to a Personal renunciation of all Temporals, retaining the Propriety thereof

*Pf. 61. 11.*

*Pf. 111. 10.*

*Act. 2. 45.*

*Act. 4. 34.*

thereof in Common or in the Body of their Orders. Which though it be meritorious and holy, and withdraws in part those that embrace these Institutes, from the care and sollicitude of worldly Goods, yet as to the Common, they are still entangl'd with them, and expos'd to all those disquiets and dangers which attend earthly Possessions.

The third and most perfect Degree, is that of *Christ* and his Apostles, and which we *Frier-Minors* make profession of, and differs from the former principally in three things.

1. That this Community of the primitive Christians did not properly abandon and give away from themselves what they possess'd, but only transferr'd the dominion thereof to their Body: But the Apostles sold all they had, and gave it to the Poor, renouncing all manner of right and title thereto, without retaining any the least thing to themselves, so much as in Common. 2. Those that incorporated themselves in this first Society of Christians, sold what they had, and brought their Money with them to be put into the Common Stock, out of which their Necessities were afterwards supplied by means of the said Money, to which they had recourse to procure what they stood in need of: But as for the Apostles, all use and administration of Money whatsoever was forbid them; neither was it lawful for them so much as in their Journeys, to carry in their purses any Coin or Money to supply their daily wants. 3. The Members of this first Christian Community were not oblig'd to any strait or penurious use of things either in Cloaths, Victuals, or Lodging, but freely enjoy'd all their Conveniencies without restraint: But the Apostles were denied several things commodious for the use and civil life of Man, as Shóoes, multiplicity of Garments, &c. Behold here justly all the Conditions of the most sublime Poverty of the *Seraphical Order of S. Francis*, stil'd therefore by a special title most deservedly; *The Patriarch of the Poor of*

*Math. 19. 27.*

*Math. 10.  
Marc. 6.  
Luc. 9. 3.*

*Math. 10. 10.  
Marc. 6. 9.  
Luc. 9. 3.*

Kk the

*the Crucify'd.* From whence it is easy to gather its Perfection and Excellency beyond that of other Religious ; it being an absolute and compleat Renunciation of Money and all Things of this world, both in Particular and in Common, purely depending upon the Providential care of the Heavenly Father, and the Charities of the People for its Support, in imitation of our Saviour. And therefore our Holy Founder, in the little Work intitl'd, *Why FF. MM. are given to the Church*, assigns this reason for one : " Towit, that they may be Witnesses, and Followers, both by word and example, of *Christ's* most high Poverty, by an intire abdication of all Propriety, and of all inordinate Affection to worldly Goods, and by a poor and humble Use of them barely for the Necessities of Nature. For at that time the virtue, perfection, and love of Holy Poverty seem'd almost in a manner quite abandon'd, repudiated, and contemn'd by all the world ; in such sort, that this fair Mistress could not find any place here on Earth, where with security and honour to rest her foot.

*Opusc. dub.  
Append.  
Cur. FF. MM.  
dati sunt. Ec-  
clesie.*

Blessed be your most holy Name, O Father of our Lord *Jesus-Christ* ! for having inspir'd this noble resolution into our Hearts. We humbly implore your Divine Assistance for the due performance thereof ; that so becoming true Imitators of the Poverty of your beloved Son, we may deserve to be reckon'd among the number of his Prime Disciples, with him who said : *What things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ. Yea, and I do esteem all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : For Whom I have suffer'd the loss of all things, and do count them but Dung, that I may gain Christ.*

*Philip, 3. 7.*

What kind of Right, or Use of things is consistent with *Franciscan* Poverty.

S. II. But notwithstanding this our so intirely divesting ourselves of all right and title to Earthly Goods : Yet in case of *Extreme Necessity*, we are allow'd by the law both of God and Nature, ( which no Man renounces that will not

not tempt the divine Providence ) the use of all Temporal things whatever, even Money itself, when it is Necessary for the preservation of corporal Life, independent of any one. A right which the very Birds of the air have to the Meat they eat. And it is call'd Natural-Divine, because instill'd by the Author of Nature in the first Creation of things, and is universal and common to all Creatures.

And at other Times too, we are permitted a Moderate use of all such things as are commodious for Man's Subsistence; excepting some few express'd in our Rule, as Money, Horses, plurality of Garments, Shooes, &c. so it be with dependance on the Will of him, who is the Owner of the thing us'd, and consequently can deprive us at his pleasure, both of the Use, and of the Thing. For in reality *Frier-Minors* have no more right to the Use of the thing they use ( understanding by it a Juridical or Civil use ) than to the Thing itself; both belonging to the Owner, and which he for the love of God, and out of pure Charity lends them: As Masters do their Servants, and Fathers their Children, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, Lodging, &c. without these having any propriety, dominion or right to the said things; but only the bare Use thereof, purely depending on the will and pleasure of their Master, or Father. And this kind of Use, we call a Natural or Simple use, or Use of Fact, to distinguish it from another nam'd a Politick or Civil use, or Use of Right, which impowers the Owner to defend his thing against unjust Invaders, and also to challenge, require, claim, or sue for it at Law; and only belongs to Masters, and such as are Proprietors of things; of all which *Frier-Minors* by their Profession are incapable. So that properly speaking we have nothing of our Own, no not so much as the Use of any thing, and all we are in possession of, belongs to other People; in such sort, that we are lodg'd in other peoples Houses, cloth'd

with other peoples Wool, nourish'd and fed with other peoples Meat and Drink, study with other peoples Books, &c. All these things appertaining, either to the Benefactors if they retain the dominion thereof, or to the Pope's Holiness, if they abdicate the same; which they are presum'd to do, if in giving their Alms they signify nothing to the contrary; and that the things be such as are lawful for the Brethren to use. For then, the Pope in quality of supreme Pastor, Father, Patron, and Protector of all poor people, and particularly of *Frier-Minors*, takes upon himself the Propriety and Dominion thereof, and as Master causes them by his Procurator or Syndick to be dispens'd for the use of the Brethren, by such ways and means as are lawful and conform to their Rule; the said Brethren having no more than the bare and simple Use thereof. As has been fully declar'd above in the IV. Chap. See the Declarations of *Nic. III.* and *Clem. V.* upon the Rule.

6. III. I said: *If the things be such as are lawful for the Brethren to use.* For otherwise this Sovereign Pastor, as himself declares, takes not into his Dominion those things, though the Donors renounce their right thereto, that are esteem'd Superfluous, Curious, or Precious; or that savour of the spirit of hoarding, or of too great plenty and abundance; by means whereof the Brethren may be able to pass their lives commodiously without Begging, or some uncertainty and casual relying upon Providence. All these things being contrary to their Institute, and the Poverty and Humility of their Calling.

It excludes  
what ever is  
Curious, Pre-  
cious and Su-  
perfluous,

Such in the first place, are Horses, Armes, and other Legacies bequeath'd to us at Funerals, to be converted into other things useful for the Brethren; if at that time we have no real Necessity thereof, either Past, Present, or Imminent. For then our Rule allows us not to receive or accept them, they being

being in such case Superfluous. Though at this present, there is no great danger of our trespassing in this point; because, what with the multiplication of *Mendicant Orders*, the poverty of the Times, and the decay of Charity in the People, Almes are considerably diminish'd of what they were formerly, and the Brethren now adays every where perpetually almost labour under some Necessity or other.

Secondly, we are forbid the use of stately and magnificent Churches, of proud high Buildings, specious Convents, excessive Ornaments, golden Chalices, silver Candle-sticks, imbroider'd Vestments, &c. All these giving the *lye* to our Poor and Humble state, which makes profession of following a Poor and Naked Saviour, in whom the Heavenly Father is well pleas'd; who desires not to be serv'd by Poor people after the same manner he is by the Rich; from whom nothing is too Stumptuous, and Magnificent to be presented to him. And particularly as to our Edifices, our Holy Founder has elsewhere plainly express'd himself. First in his *Testament*, where he says: " Let the Brethren take heed, that  
 „ they do not by any means receive Churches, Dwelling-  
 „ houses, or other Fabricks erected for their use, if they be  
 „ not according to the holy Poverty which we have pro-  
 „ mis'd in the Rule, always abiding there Guest-wife, like  
 „ Strangers and Pilgrims. And in another place of his works  
 „ he says: " In all things let holy Poverty shine among you,  
 „ especially in the Houses which you build, considering with  
 „ yourselves that of the Gospel; *That the Foxes have holes,*  
 „ *and the Fowls of the air nests; but the Son of Man has*  
 „ *not where to lay his head.* For which cause after the man-  
 „ ner of poor People, make for yourselves little Cottages to  
 „ cover you; wherein you must dwell, not as in your own's,  
 „ but as belonging to other People; like Pilgrims and Seran-  
 „ gers, whose properties are, to lodge under other Folks  
 „ roofs,

*Clem. V.  
cap. 10.*

*Test. S. F.*

*Collat. 5.*

*Math. 8. 20.*

Sollog. X6.

„ roofs, to long after their Country, to pass quietly on their  
 „ way, &c. This Evangelical Poverty is the *Basis* and ground-  
 „ work of our Order, upon which the whole Fabrick of our  
 „ Religion principally leans; in such manner, that by its firmness  
 „ and solidity it is establish'd and made secure, and by its  
 „ ruine and decay utterly overthrow'n and destroy'd. And  
 „ again: " Let them cause poor Houses to be built of wood  
 „ and loam, and little Cells for themselves to pray and  
 „ work in, that they may pass their time commendably,  
 „ and avoid idleness. Their Churches likewise or Oratories  
 „ must be plain, small, and narrow; for they ought not to  
 „ erect great, large, or fair ones; either upon the account of  
 „ Preaching, or upon any other score whatsoever. For they  
 „ will shew greater Humility, and edify the People much  
 „ more, by preaching in poor Churches at home, or in other  
 „ Peoples abroad. And if it chance at any time that Pre-  
 „ lates or others of the *Clergy*, Seculars or Regulars, make  
 „ them visits, their poor little Convents and narrow Cells,  
 „ will preach to them, and afford them matter of Edification,  
 „ much more to their credit and advantage, than the most  
 „ quaint and eloquent Discourses. As being precious Monu-  
 „ ments of the holy Poverty and Humility of the *Franciscan*  
 „ Order, which makes profession to be Imitators of a poor  
 „ Crucify'd Lord.

Clem. V.  
 cap. 9.

Thirdly, it is unlawful for the Brethren to have Store-  
 houses, and Annual provisions of *Wood, Corn, Wine,*  
*Oil, Butter, &c.* wherewith to fill them, so to pass the  
 rest of the Year without begging; unless it be in those pla-  
 ces, where the Necessity of their Convents, and want of  
 Alms in due time oblige them to it; whereof the Ministers  
 and Custodes, and Guardians with the two elder Discreets  
 of the Convent are to be Judges. Otherwise to do well, we  
 should not exceed above a Month or two's provision before  
 hand,

hand, of what kind soever it be. For the greater Uncertainty there is in our manner of living, that is, the more we rely upon Providence, and the oftener we have recourse to our Lord's Table by begging, the more welcome we are, and the nearer we come up to the observation of our Rule.

Fourthly, for the same reason, we are not allow'd to have Lands, Vineyards, Houses, &c. if they have yearly Revenues, Rents, Annuities or Pensions annex'd to them; or are to be let, till'd, &c. for the benefit of the Brethren. Because all these things induce a Certainty and daily Independance of Providence in the manner of living, and take away Begging; both which are against our Institute, and no ways becoming Pilgrims and Strangers, such as *Frier-Minors* ought to be in this world. But if the Donor by himself, or by his Bailiff, Steward, or other person appointed in his name, shall sell or change the things foresaid; or so bestow them upon the Brethren, that their Syndick can in the Pope's name sell or change, and so turn them into the Brethrens lawful uses, then may the Brethren without offence accept and receive them, to wit in such a Quantity, and so far, as their Present or Imminent occasions require. Yea, and Annuities too or yearly Pensions; if they are for real necessities Yearly recurring, and that a Protestation or Declaration be made that such are not accepted by us, nor receiv'd by virtue of any Grant or Deed, as Due, but simply and purely by way of Almes, without any the least juridical claim, right, or title to the same.

§. IV. But the Brethren themselves cannot in rigor buy, sell, lend, borrow, let or set, pawn, change, give, or otherwise dispose of things by Juridical contract, or any Civil obligation; or exact any thing by Law as their due, even though it should be the price of their own Labour. Neither can they change the Will of the Donor, by applying

*Clem. V.  
cap. 6.*

It disables us from making any Civil Contracts.

Several Cases the



wherein we  
violate this  
precept.

the thing given to any other Use than what it was given for, without his Consent, either express'd, if present, or candidly and sincerely presum'd, if absent. Neither can the Brethren without their Superiours leave, explicite or implicate, receive, keep, use, lock up, hide, transport or conveigh away, give, change, or dispose of any thing whatsoever; being all these Acts do belong to Masters, and those that have dominion and right of things, and not to poor *Franciscans*, who have not so much as a Pin of their own to dispose of without leave of others; though it be only the simple use of Fact, which is also at their Superiours disposal, and cannot be possess'd by the Brethren but with leave, without incurring the sin of Propriety.

From whence it follows, that a Religious of this Order, for example a Cook, that has the disposal and distribution of things committed to his care for the use of the Community, is oblig'd to follow the Orders of his Superiour in what belongs to his charge, and not his own private Sentiment. And if he gives more or less, better or worse, or accommodates and dresses it after any other manner than the Superiour ordains, he offends against Poverty; for by so doing he acts independent of another, and disposes of the things as if he were the Master and Proprietor of them, and not as if he depended upon another. He would also sin, if by a notorious Carelesness he should lose, waste, or spoil any thing committed to his Trust. For first it belongs only to the Master of the goods, to waste and consume them at his pleasure. Secondly, things in Religion are given totally for the service of the Religious, and those Persons that are intrusted by their Employments with things of the House, whether it be in the *Infirmery*, *Sacristy*, *Library*, *Wardrobe*, cannot dispose or order them otherwise than for the advantage of the Community; so that if they should dissipate

pate or wast them, they would certainly violate their vow of Poverty, and also be guilty of the sin of Theft, according to this Maxime of the Canon Law, *A considerable Negligence is look'd upon as a fraud or cheat.* The same may be said of every Private Religious in regard of his Habit, Lamp, Breviary, Beads, or whatever is given him for his particular use. *Cassian* has an example upon this Subject, which shews how exact and strict the Ancient Fathers were in this point. The Dispenscer, or he who keeps or gives out the provisions of the Monastery, coming into the Kitchen, perceiv'd that the Cook, who had been washing his Pease to boil for Dinner, had let Three fall upon the ground, and he immediately acquainted the *Abbot* with it, who gave the Cook a publick penance for the little care he had of what belong'd to the Community. And *Cassian* adds, that those Ancient Religious did not only look upon themselves as Consecrated to God, but also look'd upon all the goods of the Monastery to be so too; and this made them to be so very careful, even of the least thing that belong'd to the Community, and to treat one another upon all occasions with singular Respect.

Nevertheless if any thing be to be bought or sold, the Brethren may rate or value it; they may also agree about the Price; may procure the Payment by some convenient hand, obliging themselves thereto, not by strict covenant or civil promise, but out of pure fidelity and natural Justice. And lastly, may acquire the simple Use of Fact thereof; supposing in all this the Superiours leave, and that the thing be such as they really stand in need of, and be lawful for the Brethren to use. They likewise may beg and intreat those, who have dominion of the thing they use, to defend it by Law, or to exact it by Justice, either in their own Persons, or by their Deputies. But in all this, a Special Caution is to be us'd, that they themselves carefully

L 1

abstain

*De instit. Re-*  
*nunt. lib. 4.*  
*cap. 20.*

Other Cases  
in which we  
do not vio-  
late it.

abstain from Words and Actions any ways favouring of dominion, civil obligation, or the use and administration of Money, either by themselves, or by an interpos'd person.

*Nic. III. art. 6.*

The Brethren may likewise with consent, and in the name of the Benefactors or chief Owners ( whose meer Instruments in all such cases they are ) with Superiours leave, both give, and change things. And also in the name and by orders of their own Superiours do the like, in such things as are left to their Superiours disposal; as are commonly those that are got by Begging, or given for reward of the Brethrens Labour, unless the Donor expressly signify the contrary. So can Superiours, towit, Generals and Provincials in their respective Districts ( and others with their commission ) by themselves and without their Syndick, change out of the Order, all kind of Implements, as Books and other moveable Goods; and within the Order, all things indifferently, as well immoveable as moveable, according as they shall judge fit for the commodity of their respective Provinces and Convents. Likewise the fore-said Superiours ( again always supposing either the Popes or Benefactors leave respectively, by whose power and authority they act as their Ministers and Instruments ) can also give, either by themselves or by others to whom they give commission, all things within the Order. But out of the Order they cannot, except upon the conditions specify'd in the Popes Declaration, who is Master of all things given us, whose dominion the Donors have renounc'd, as has been said; and therefore his will and pleasure therein is punctually to be observ'd. These conditions are: That the thing which is to be given, be Moveable; that it be rated or tax'd by a General or Provincial Chapter; that it be given with Superiours leave to promote Piety, or for some other plausible and religious motive.

*Nic. III. ibid.*

Moreover the Brethren may also satisfy Work-men for their labour

labour with meat, drink, &c. not by Civil Contract, but by way of Gratitude or natural Justice, obliging themselves thereto. But as I said, and it must never be forgotten, let them beware in all the foresaid transactions, of usurping any Propriety or Juridical Right, of contracting any Civil Obligation, of using or administering any Money, or of giving Occasion to others to esteem them so to do; for we are bound, not only to avoid evil, but also the appearance of evil. Behold the principal Obligations of *Friars-Minors* in matter of Poverty; the Sum whereof consists in this, that none of us must have, receive, use, keep, or dispose of any thing as his Own, either in Common or in Particular, as Lord, Master and Proprietor thereof. We will now speak something of the Means, whereby to preserve the same.

The Saints and Masters of Spirit furnish us with a very proper Expedient for this purpose. A Religious Man, say they, ought to be in all things he has for his use, like a *Statue*, which is adorn'd, and left naked again, without being troubl'd, or making any resistance. In the same manner, you ought to behave yourself towards your Books, Habit, Beads, Chamber, Lamp, or any thing else that is lent you to make use of; and if you are order'd to leave them, or to make an exchange with others, you must be no more concern'd, than a *Statue* is when it is undress'd; and by this means all Propriety will be avoided: Whereas, if when you are bid to change your Chamber, your Habit, or part with this or that thing, or exchange it for another, you find any repugnance, and are not like a *Statue* therein, it is a sign you look upon those things as properly belonging to yourself; otherwise you would not be vex'd to part with them, or to be depriv'd of them. For this reason they advise Superiours sometimes to try their Religions, as God did *Abraham*, to make an experiment of their virtue, and give them thereby an Occasion of making

*From all appearance of Evil refrain yourselves. 1. Thess. 5. 22.*

An excellent mean to preserve us from the sin of Propriety.

Lij every

*Ep. SS. Pa-*  
*trum Tom. 3.*

every day a new progress in Perfection. And without doubt it is an excellent trial of their vertue, to take away now and then, what is lent them to make use of. The Ancient Fathers of the Desart us'd their Religious to this Practice, in order to disengage them from every thing, and that they might account nothing as their own. Thus *S. Dorothens* treated his Scholar *S. Dosibens*. He us'd to give him a Habit to make up for himself, and take it again from him, and bestow it upon another, after he had taken a great deal of pains about it. Another time, the same *S. Dosibens*, whilst he look'd to the Sick, had a great mind to have a Knife, and ask'd it of *S. Dorothens*, not for himself, but for the use of the Infirmary which he had care of. Whereupon the Saint reply'd, Well *Dosibens* do's the Knife please you? Had you rather be a Slave to a Knife, than to *Jesus-Christ*? Do you not blush to think that a Knife is your Master? Henceforward I charge you not so much as to touch it. Which *S. Dosibens* comply'd with ever after: So much force had this grave rebuke and prohibition upon him. I wish we would in the like manner often reproach ourselves, and say, Are you not asham'd that the love of such a trifle as a Lamp, a Book, a Bird, an Ink-horn, should prevail so much upon you, and cause you so much uneasiness? And do not believe that these things are so frivolous, or of such little consequence as you imagine, after you have examin'd them. For as *S. Hierom* says, perhaps they may seem Trifles and very inconsiderable to those who are strangers as yet to Vertue and Perfection, but at the bottom, they contain things of profound Wisdom and exquisite Perfection; which God has hid from the Wise and Prudent, but discover'd to the Simple and Humble of heart.

*Reg. Monach.*  
*cap. 12.*

*Col. 4.*

From hence appears the great folly of those Religious Persons, of whom *Cassian* makes mention, who having left considerable

considerable Estates in the World, come afterwards in Religion to place their Affections upon Trifles. I am at a loss, says he, when I would speak of that childish weakness of some Religious, who after they had bid adieu to what they had in the World, fall in love with trifles in Religion; and seek their little conveniencies with so much zeal and solicitude as they do; so that their Inclinations are sometimes more violently bent upon these inconsiderable things, than they were before upon the Riches they had in the world. What do's it signify to these Men to have left great Possessions, if they have not also left all disorder'd Passions towards them? By retaining a desire and inclination to little things, since they cannot aim higher at present, they discover too clearly, that they have not quite destroy'd their former Passions, but only chang'd their Objects. Their care and anxiety is still the same, and yet they make little or no account thereof, as if different Objects, and not disorder'd Passions, made Avarice a crime. They are of opinion, that we may leave great things, to fix our Affections upon less, and that it may be done for this reason; but they are in an error, for we renounce greater, in order to despise lesser things with greater ease. For if our Affections continue irregular, and Avarice domineers in our Hearts, it imports very little what is the cause, since our Hearts are as much troubl'd and disquieted for Trifles in Religion, as they could have been for an Estate in the World. The one is as criminal as the other, and there is no difference at all: Yea these disorders of our Mind make us more unhappy and less excusable, than Worldlings; and we shew a meaner Spirit, than they do. For they set their Hearts upon what has at least some Appearance of greatness in it; whereas we, after having forsaken all, debase ourselves by a degenerate pursuit of what we ought generously to condemn. We ought to increase in Perfection daily;

and

The childish  
weakness of  
some Reli-  
gious tax'd.

Ephes. 4. 13.

and grow into a *Perfect Man*, as *S. Paul* says; but we act quite contrary, and instead of becoming Men, by entering into Religion, and by a generous forsaking the world and disengaging ourselves from it, we are by our over-foolish Affection to toys and childish baubles, become Children. A Child cry's when you take his Rattle from him, or deny him any thing he has a mind to; just so the Parties we speak of, fret themselves and are troubl'd, when they are depriv'd of any thing they fancy; or when all their demands are not granted. And certainly it is a thing very ridiculous and much to be pity'd, to see a grave Religious Person, who had the courage once to condemn the World, become so strangely fond of Trifles, as to be as uneasy and troubl'd at the parting with them, as a Child is, when you take away his Baby.

Ah my Soul! what will it avail thee to forsake great things in the World for the love of God, if thou cleav'it to little ones in Religion to love and please thyself? Religious Men are the most miserable of all Men, if they permit things of so little consequence to do them so much harm: For being Poor by Profession, they nourish Avarice in their Hearts, and though they heap up neither Gold nor Silver, yet they pick up a great many Trifles, to which they tie their Affections, and suffer as much uneasiness from them, as from all the Riches in the world. O Sweet Jesus! never permit such Childish folly to creep in among us, after we have consecrated our Hearts to thee; but grant us, (we humbly beseech thee) true Poverty of Spirit, a perfect disengagement from all earthly Goods; that so we may transfer all our Affections and Hearts-desires to Heaven, to enjoy thee alone, who art the true riches, joy, satisfaction, and delight of thine Elect.

Spiritual  
Rights fall  
not under  
this precept  
of Poverty.

S. V. Finally, it is here to be Noted for the clearer understanding of *Franciscan* Poverty, that we are not forbidden by it Spiritual Rights, or Rights Equivalent to them; which therefore the Brethren may lawfully enjoy. Such not being

being to be accounted Temporal Goods. For although our Rule renounce all propriety and right to Temporals, yet it do's not to Spirituals; our Poverty being the very same with that of the Apostles, to whom *Christ* granted the like favours, when he sent them to Preach, Baptise, cure Infirmities, cast out Devils, &c. And such kind of Spiritual Rights, or Equivalent to them, are our Priviledges of exemption from Bishops, from paying Taxes, the rights of Burials, of having Churches, Bells, &c. of Questing or begging Alms in certain places, of Preaching, hearing Confessions, administering the Sacraments. Such infine are the Indulgences, Graces, Favours, and Priviledges of the Order granted by the *Apostolical See*. All which are to be reckon'd amongst Spiritual, or equivalent to Spiritual things, whereof we may be Masters, and defend them against our Adversaries by course of Law; no less than our Reputation and good Name, which are likewise not to be esteem'd Temporal Goods.

§. VI. *But as Pilgrims and Strangers in this world.*] Disarray'd of all, and esteeming nothing our own, but ourselves. All that, which makes us to defy, quarrel, contest, accuse God and Man, is, that we have thought ourselves to be Proprietors of those things, of which we have but only the Use. We must, says *Epictetus*, take all the Blessings of the world as a Passenger, who going out of a Ship, gathers Cockle-shells upon the Sand, yet ever has his eye upon the Ship, to which he is engag'd. All these Treasures of the earth what are they? Truly no other but silly Cockle-shells, which we poor Mortals embark'd in this Vessel of Life, and astray'd from our dear Country, descend upon the Quicksands of these lower Regions; where instead of prosecuting our Journey homewards, we amuse ourselves in gathering together and boarding up Trifles. O that our eyes were once well open'd, and fix'd upon the delights of Paradise our na-

tive

*My dearest, I beseech you, as Strangers and Pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the Soul. 1. Pet. 5. 11. We have not here a permanent City; but we seek that which is to come. Heb. 13. 14.*



Pf. 119. 5.

Rom. 7. 24.

tive Country, we should then soon discover the deceitfulness and vanity of such foolish Toies. We should say with the Royal Prophet : *Wo is me, that my Sejourning is prolonged ! I have dwelt with the Inhabitants of Cedar : My Soul has been long a Sejourner.* And with *S. Paul : Unhappy Man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this Death ?* But alas ! that which oft diverts us from this point of our Happiness, is, that our eyes are dazzl'd with the false lights of the World, they are darkn'd with so many mists and vapours of our own Appetites and Passions ; that we cannot see the Goods of Heaven in the brightest of their Day. Worldly Chains have a certain attractive vigor and pleasure, which is only painted, but they have a most certain sorrow, and a most uncertain contentment ; they have a painful labour, and a timorous rest, a possession full of misery, and void of all beatitude. If we had our Sight well clear'd, to penetrate and see what it is, we should then say of all the most ravishing Objects of the world ; How senseless was I when I courted you ? O deceitful World ! thou didst appear Great to me, when I saw thee not as thou art ; but so soon as I did see thee rightly, I did then cease to see thee ; for thou wast no more to me but just Nothing. *S. Chrysostom* makes such account of this Maxime, that he says : There is but one Vertue in the world, that causes all other Vertues, which is, to carry one's self as a Pilgrim of this world, and a Citizen of paradise.

The Conditions of Pilgrims and Strangers.

But to understand this great *Moral* thoroughly to the bottom, we will here examine somewhat nearer the properties of Pilgrims and Strangers in a Country, which are principally these. First, Pilgrims lodge in other peoples Houses, without taking care to build any for themselves : They ask of their Hosts, what they want for Meat, Drink, &c. They throw aside all useless and

## §. VI.

*Their Poverty.*

273

and unprofitable Burdens, to be able to travel with greater ease : They carry no more with them for their Journey than what is just necessary, for fear of Thieves ; and they husband it to the best advantage, contenting themselves with little upon all occasions, lest they come to want, or to be stopt for debt : They go *Incognito*, after such manner, that if they be adorn'd with any eminent Qualities, as Learning, Nobility, Beauty, they make no shew thereof, but pass on the Road like other common Travellers : They aspire not after Offices, Charges and Publick Employ's : They disdain not to be inform'd, and put into their way when they are out. They diligently prosecute their Journey, without stopping on the Road at the sight of charming and delightful Objects : They provoke not, or give occasion of offence to any, but shew themselves humble, courteous, sweet, affable, obliging to all they meet. And lastly, if they happen to be affronted, they pass unconcern'd, not stopping to revenge their Quarrel, but hasten all they can to arrive the sooner at their dearly beloved Country.

Now ( Reader ) make the Application, and you will see how all this agrees with a *Franciscan* Pilgrim, or a poor humble *Frier-Minor* passing through this World in his way to Heaven, according as you see him here describ'd in this Treatise. A man intirely devested of all what over the Inhabitants of the earth may pretend to of Riches, Honours, and Pleasures. One, who can say with *S. Paul*, *We brought nothing into this world, doubtless neither can we take any thing away; but having Food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content.* And that of the *Paralipomenon*, *We are Strangers before thee, and Sejourners, as were all our Fathers; our Days on the earth are as a Shadow, and there is none Abiding.*

1. Tim. 6. 7.

1. Paral. 29.  
15.

O my Pilgrim Soul! take Courage, and be not disconsolate  
M m in

in thy passage, which is so very short, nor be dejected at thy being Poor; for we are going to Heaven our dear Country, where we shall abound in all things thy Heart can desire, and *Jesus* is our Guide. What matters it, whether we get or lose in this world, be honour'd or condemn'd, have Friends or Foes, sink or swim? If *Jesus* loves us, and we him, it is enough. Live the Cross, and my crucify'd Redeemer. Adieu deceitful World with all its Treasures, Honours and Delights: *Jesus* is my Hope and Happiness. O my sweet Saviour! I humbly beg of thee to make me partaker of thy precious Poverty, to the end I may become a true Pilgrim in this life, in such sort that I may diligently travel to the happy rest of Life Everlasting.

§. VII. *Serving our Lord in Poverty, and Humility.*]

These are the Liveries of our Lord *Jesus*: They are the two Symboles or distinctive Signs of our *Minoritical* Order, whereby it is known and distinguish'd from all Others: They are the two Pillars, whereon this our *Seraphical* Rule is built: In fine, they are the two most precious Jewels of the Gospel, of admirable virtue, which by making us poor do enrich us, by making us little give us a greatness far greater than any the World can give, and by glorying to have no glory put us into the possession of Glory.

O most happy Service of our Lord *Jesus*! a thousand times to be preferr'd before all the Dignities, Honours, and Employments of the most flourishing Monarchs of the world; whose desire is nothing but fire, fruition but disturbance, and loss but repentance. A brave Captain said to a Souldier who dy'd with him: Although thou hadst been unknown all thy life-time, it is no small Honour for thee to Dy this day with thy Master. And who would not hold it for a great Glory to have the Son of God for Master, for Captain, for Companion in his poverty and humility; in hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, disgrace, and in all his afflictions and tribulations? Yea, who would not account it a great Dignity to be daily Crucify'd with him? To distend his

Hands

Take up my  
yoke upon you,  
and learn of  
me, because I  
am Meek, and  
Humble of  
heart. Because  
I am Needy  
and Poor.

Math. II. 29.  
P. 85. 1.

Poverty and  
Humility the  
true Liveries  
of the Ser-  
vants of Je-  
sus-Christ.

Hands and Arms upon the Cross, in withdrawing them from violences, rapines, ruines, wherewith the Spirit of Lying transports us? To fetter his Feet, and hinder them from running after the unbridl'd desires of his Heart? To make bitter his Tongue, in subduing the pleasures of Taste? To cover his Body with wounds, in suppressing the incitements of the flesh by an holy Mortification? To lessen himself by the contempt of Honour, according to the example of him, who being able always to walk upon the wings of *Cherubins*, would creep amongst us like a Worm of the earth: So to have the honour to say with *S. Paul*: *I Gal. 6. 17.*  
*bear the Marks of my Saviour Jesus upon my Body.*

O my beloved *Jesus*, my King, my Lord, my Captain, Companion, and Master! thou to me, and I to thee. Behold me from henceforth dedicated to thy divine Service, to obey thee, love thee, honour thee, and to be intirely Thine, since thou art intirely and wholly Mine. And seeing thou com'st to me Poor, Meek and Humble, I likewise will go to meet thee, with Poverty, Meekness and Humility; glorying to wear the same Liveries which my Lord and Master wears.

§. VIII. *Go confidently for Alms.* ] Courageously, *I am a Beggar, and poor; our Lord is careful of me. Ps. 39. 18.*  
 without shame, or fear. Asking it for the Love of God, mildly, cheerfully, sweetly, modestly, prudently, religiously; without arrogance, haughtiness, presumption, disdain, contempt, boldness, importunity, hypocrisy: And receiving it at the hands of their Benefactors with humility, gratitude and thanks-giving; *As becomes the Servants of God, and followers of most holy Poverty.* I say: *Asking it for the Love of God*, because Nothing is so endearing, and more powerful to move the hearts of men to mercy and compassion than that. For as our *Seraphical Father* says: "It is *Opusc. Tom. 3. Orac. 2.*  
 „ a noble piece of Prodigality to offer the Love of God for  
 „ Alms; and those that make less account of it than of their  
 Money,

M m ij

Money,

„Mony, are the greatest of all Fools; since the inestimable  
 „price of this Divine Love is alone sufficient to purchase for  
 „them the Kingdom of Heaven; and that the Love of him,  
 „who so much lov'd us, can never be valu'd enough.

Motives to  
 encourage us  
 to go a Beg-  
 ging.

After this manner then let the Brethren go confidently for  
 Alms, for the following reasons. 1. To humble themselves. 2.  
 To give Benefactors occasion of Merit, and of making satisfac-  
 tion for their Sins by redeeming them with Alms-deeds. 3.  
 To exercise their Patience. 4. To raise their Confidence in  
 God; whose Hand is always full of good things, and never  
 fails to pour them out at convenient time to supply the wants  
 of his devout Servants, who seeking the Kingdom of Hea-  
 ven and his Justice, put all their trust in him. 5. To imitate  
 the Example of their divine Master; who, according to *S. Bernard*  
 during the three days he was lost in his Journey  
 with his Parents to *Jerusalem*, begg'd his bread from door  
 to door; and afterwards begg'd a Lodging in the house of  
*Zacheus*, a Cup of water of the *Samaritan* woman at  
*Jacob's well*, an Ass to make his triumphant entry into  
*Jerusalem* before his Passion, a Room to celebrate the *Pasch*  
 with his Disciples, Necessaries of the devout Women that  
 accompany'd him; and lastly concluded his innocent life.  
 Begging, when upon the Cross he said, *Sitio*, I Thirst.

Colloq. 37.

„Oh what a pleasing and delightful thing it is, says  
 „our Holy Founder, under the title of *Frier-Minors*, to  
 „beg Alms! By whom, opportunity is given to the Elect,  
 „to accomplish that most sweet word of our Saviour, for  
 „which at the last Day they shall be so much commended  
 „before all the world, to wit, *So long as you did to one of*  
 „*these my little Brethren, you did to me.* And again in  
 another place, inviting us to the practice of asking Alms,  
 he says: „Those Brethren that take pains in Questing and  
 „gathering up the Charities of the Faithful, shall have a  
 great

Math. 25. 40.

1. Reg. 4. 9.

„ great reward, as being the occasion that Benefactors are  
 „ gainers thereby : For all which Men do in this world,  
 „ will perish ; but for their Charities and Alms-deeds,  
 „ they shall receive the recompence thereof from our Lord.  
 „ And therefore himself in all the chief Feasts, when his  
 „ Affairs would permit, was accusom'd to go a Begging, al-  
 „ ledging that the saying of the Prophet, *Man has eat the*  
*bread of Angels*, was verified in poor Religious Beggars.  
 „ For that bread, says he, is truly the Bread of Angels,  
 „ which is ask'd for the Love of God, and which holy Po-  
 „ verty gathers at the doors of the Faithful, who, by the  
 „ suggestion of their good Angels, bestow it on us for God  
 „ sake. And would affirm, that he felt a most singular de-  
 „ light and satisfaction, and a certain interiour joy both of  
 „ Body and Soul, when he had set before him at Table  
 „ Scraps begg'd and given at peoples Doors for the Love of  
 „ God ; which he esteem'd far beyond the greatest Dainties  
 „ and choicest Dishes of great Mens Tables, to which he  
 „ was invited. " Because, said he, what is given in Cha-  
 „ rity for *Christ*, is sanctify'd and bless'd, by the Praise and  
 „ Love of the Almighty. For when a Brother asks an Alms,  
 „ he first says : *Bless'd*, and Bless'd be our Lord, and then  
 „ adds : Good People, bestow on us an Alms for the Love  
 „ of God ; so that Praise sanctifies it, and the Love of God  
 „ blesses it. And for this reason I will go willingly, con-  
 „ fidently, and joyfully a Begging ; for I account it a sin-  
 „ gular Favour, yea an Honour, and a Dignity becoming a  
 „ Royal Person, and which much contributes to the Glory  
 „ of him, who being Lord and Master of all, would for  
 „ our sakes become the Servant of all ; and when in his  
 „ own most glorious Majesty he abounded in all things, in  
 „ our Humanity would be made poor, needy, contempt-  
 „ ible, and in want of all things.

*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Colloq. 38.*

*Colloq. 6.*

*Philip. 4. 7.*

O happy

O happy Beggars ! O blessed Alms ! O delicious Fragments gather'd at the doors of the Faithful, and given for the Love of God ! How much ought you to be priz'd ? You are the celestial *Manna* descended from above, more delightful to our palates than the most exquisite Sweet-Meats. You are the choice Dish of the Table of *Iesus-Christ*, the King of Kings. O who will give me to eat of you ? Mercifully grant, sweet Lord, we humbly beseech thee, that all *Frier-Minors* may be truly sensible of the real value thereof, and never loath any thing that comes from such good hands, how ever mean and course it may appear ; it being sanctify'd and bless'd with the Love of thee, for whose sake it is ask'd, given, and receiv'd.

Considerations to move our Benefactors to bestow their Alms upon us.

*Nic. III. art. 2.*

*Math. 10. 41.*  
Prayer is good with Fasting and Alms, rather than to lay up Treasures of Gold ; because Alms delivers from death, and that is it which purges sins, and makes to find Mercy, and Life Everlasting. *Tob. 12. 8.*  
Water quenches burning fire, and Alms resists Sins. *Ecdi. 3. 33.*

Now I intreat our Benefactors here to take notice for their Comforts, that the Alms which they bestow on us for God's sake, are no less Advantageous to themselves, than to us ; seeing they are Meritorious to Life Everlasting, and so much the more profitable, by how much things Temporal are exchang'd for Eternal, as Pope *Nicolas* speaks in his Declaration upon our Rule. For if, as the Saviour of the world assures us, *He that receives a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive the reward of a Prophet ; and he that receives a Just Man in the name of a Just Man, shall receive the reward of a Just Man ; and whosoever shall give to drink to one of these Little ones a cup of Cold Water, only in the name of a Disciple, Amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward :* Shall the Offerings which the Faithful make of their goods to God, for the use and benefit of poor *Frier-Minors*, who by their profession of an Evangelical and Apostolical Rule, are deservedly rank'd amongst *Christ's* prime Disciples, lose their reward, and not rather be beneficial to the Donors thereof ? Yea verily an unknown and inestimable Reward shall attend them : Since they are Treasures which are here lent, to be restor'd with interest of an Hundred-fold in the other world ; since by the consumption of their Goods, their Sins are consum'd ;

sum'd; since they repose their Alms in the bosom of those, who cease not, Night and Day, to be mindful of them, who apply to them all the mortifications and meritorious works of a Religious State, insinuate whose Prayers and Sacrifices mount up to the Throne of God, penetrating the Heavens to obtain for them benedictions on Earth. For which cause, the Apostle *S. Paul* very fitly compares to Seed, the Alms which the Faithful bestow on the Poor. For, as Seed thrown into the Ground, though it seem to be cast away, yet is not lost, but is laid up in certain hope of great increase at the time of Harvest: So that which Men give in Alms, though it appears to be thrown away and to perish in respect of the Giver; yet in the end it proves most fruitful, the benefit thereof manifestly returning to him again. For according to the measure of the Alms or Seeding (which is esteem'd more or less according to the Will and Ability of the Giver) the increase and abundance of the Harvest, that is, of Grace and Glory, shall be proportion'd. It is this, which the Apostle gives his Charitable *Corinthians* to understand, when he says: *He that Sow's sparingly, sparingly also shall Reap; and he that Sow's in blessings, of blessings also shall Reap. Every one as he has determin'd in his heart, not of Sadness, or of Necessity; for God loves a Cheerful Giver. And God is able to make all Grace abound in you; that in all things always having all sufficiency, you may abound to all good works, as it is written: He distributed, he gave to the Poor; his Justice remains for ever. And he that ministers seed to the Sower, will give also bread to eat: And will multiply your seed, and will augment the increases of the fruits of your Justice.* „ And therefore, O Man, says our Holy Founder, bestow „ thy Alms cheerfully on the Poor, by whom thou giv'st „ it to thy Creator. He, in the person of the Poor, makes himself

*He lends our Lord that has Mercy on the Poor: And he will repay him the like. Prov.*

*19. 17.*

*Shut up Alms in the heart of the Poor, and the same shall obtain for thee against all evil Eccli. 29. 15.*

*Give Alms, and behold all things are clean to you.*

*Luc. 11. 41.*

*2. Cor. 9. 6.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3. Serm. 3.*



„ himself thy Debtor, to return thee it again with full and  
 „ good Measure, press'd down, shaken together, and running  
 „ over. It is by the Poor only, that we can make an Offer-  
 „ ring of our goods to God, who, by the Poor alone,  
 „ stands in need of what we have. See then, Brethren,  
 „ how happy a man an *Almoner* is, who gives to him  
 „ that returns it again, and gives abundantly to all. To  
 „ whom, not only the Rich man that has much, gives  
 „ much; but likewise the Poor man gives very much, if he  
 „ gives what he has, though it be never so little. The Wi-  
 „ dow in the Gospel cast but two *Mites* into the Treasury,  
 „ which is no more than one Farthing, and yet it was es-  
 „ teem'd a great deal by our Saviour, who publicly prais'd  
 „ her for it before his Apostles: *Amen I say to you, that*  
 „ *this poor Widow has cast in more than all that have cast*  
 „ *into the Treasury. For all they of their abundance have*  
 „ *cast in, but she of her penury has cast in all she had,*  
 „ *her whole Living.* Go to then, O yee Rich ones, dis-  
 „ tribute among the Poor your earthly, scanty, frail and  
 „ corruptible Goods, to purchase therewith in Heaven eter-  
 „ nal, unmeasurable, and everlasting Delights. For what  
 „ ever you leave here behind you on earth, withers, cor-  
 „ rupts and comes to nothing in a short time; that alone,  
 „ which during your life you bestow in Alms for the re-  
 „ lief of the Poor, will always flourish, remain green, and  
 „ never fade. What you give in this world, you will find  
 „ in the other; you give Temporals, but shall receive Eternals.  
 „ Again may our Benefactors here for their Comfort, and  
 „ farther Instruction observe, That when Alms are given to  
 „ Religious Persons, not only the Givers reap great benefit  
 „ thereby, and the wants of others are supply'd: But God  
 „ likewise by the Receivers continual Prayers and Thanks-gi-  
 „ ving for the same, is exceedingly honour'd. So that Charity  
 „ bestow'd

Marc. 12. 43.

bestow'd in this sort, is a singular act of Religion and Worship of God, according to that of the Apostle in the fore-mention'd Epistle, where he says: *That being enriched in all things, you may abound to all Simplicity, which works by us Thanks-giving to God. For the administration of this Office do's not only supply those things which the Saints want, but is abundant also by many Thanks-givings to our Lord; whiles by the proof of this Ministry they glorify God for your profess'd Obedience to the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal Distribution to them and to all men, and by their Praying for you.* By which means also Almighty God is oftentimes mov'd to confer very signal Favours upon others for the sake of Religious; and in general is prevail'd upon to divert his just indignation and displeasure conceiv'd against Sinners. For as the Walls and Rampire of a City, serve to beat back the Attacks of the Enemy; so, says *S. Hierom*, do the Prayers of Saints, serve to repulse the effects of God's Threats.

2. Cor. 9. 12.

in *Ezech.* 13. 5.

This truth is made clear from that which God said to *Abraham* upon the occasion of the Destruction of *Sodome*. The Abominations of *Sodome* and *Gomorrha* were come to such a height, that God resolv'd to destroy these two Cities; he discovers his intention to *Abraham* in the way to *Sodome*, and *Abraham* being already near the City said to him, *Alas O Lord wilt thou destroy the Just with the Wicked! If there are fifty Just persons in the City, shall they perish with the rest? Or rather if there be found fifty Just persons, wilt thou not pardon the rest for their sakes? And our Lord answer'd, For the love only of Ten I will not destroy it.* But there were not Ten Just persons found; wherefore God destroy'd it by fire, with four other Cities. Here you see, how profitable the Sanctity of life in Just Persons is to the rest of Mankind; for what an Advantage

How beneficial Religious Persons are to the Commonwealth. *Gen.* 18.

N n

would

would it not have been to these miserable wretches, to have had Ten vertuous men amongst them ? Which also shews us, how great an Esteem, Value, and Respect we ought to have for such Persons, and how willingly to contribute to their Relief. Wherefore this is one of the reasons which the Saints and Divines bring, to prove that Religious Persons ought to be maintain'd at the Publick Charge, though they should render no exterior Service to the Publick, but should remain retir'd in their Cells, they thereunto even in this Retreat rendring very great Service. Because it is for the love of a small number of Vertuous men, that God suffers and has patience with so many Wicked in the world. Go, says he to his Prophet, *through all the streets of Jerusalem, see, consider, and search in every corner thereof, whether thou can'st find a Man that can do Justice, and that will keep his word, and I will pardon the City.*

Jerem. 5, 2.

What is also to be taken notice of, concerning this Destruction of Sodom, is that which the Scripture adds, *That when God overthrew the Cities of the Country, he remember'd Abraham, and deliver'd Lot from the ruine of the Cities in which he liv'd. Lot was the Nephew of Abraham, and for this reason God presses him to save himself; Make hast to go to the City, for which thou hast spoken, says the Angel of God, and save thyself there, for I can do nothing, till thou art enter'd into it. O Bounty, O infinite Mercy of God ! How tender a love hast thou for the Just, and what is there that thou do'st not do for them ? Thou tiest the hands of the Ministers of vengeance, and wilt not permit them to do any thing, till he be in Security. Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let us take care to be Just; let us endeavour to gain God's Favour; and be assur'd that God will have care of whatsoever belongs to us. He will be mindful of*

Gen. 19.

of our Friends and Benefactors, and the more he sees, that the care we take to discharge our Duty, and give ourselves intirely to him, the more he will pour down his Graces and Benedictions upon them. For if the Crimes of the Wicked cry to God for vengeance, according to these words of Scripture, *The voice of thy Brothers blood cries out to me from the earth.* Ought not we to believe that Piety and good works of vertuous Persons, cry out also more efficaciously to God for Mercy, who is so ready to do us good, and to whom it is proper to pardon, and to have Mercy?

Gen. 4. 10.

O my God, all Love, all Bounry, all Liberality! who shew'st down benefits, and heap'st mercies without measure daily and hourly upon our whole Order, by the hands of the Faithful; yea, many times also making use of Infidels to that end. We humbly beseech thee, gratiouſly to vouchsafe to exchange these their Temporal goods for Eternal, rewarding with Everlasting Life the Alms they bestow on us for thy Name's sake. And in acknowledgment of these, and all other thy innumerable favours (O great Benefactor!) we gratefully offer thee our Hearts, Souls, Thoughts, words, works, and all that by thy grace we have and are, as Sacrifices of perpetual praise and thanks-giving, in behalf both of them and ourselves.

*Neither must they be Asham'd. ] Because the Disciple is not above the Master, nor the Servant above his Lord: It suffices the Disciple, that he be as his Master; and the Servant as his Lord. Now if a vile Creature do that, which he sees his Omnipotent Sovereign, Lord, and Creator do before him, no man will say it is a Disgrace, but an Honour, not an Ignominy, but a Glory, not a Shame or Reproach, but a piece of Gallantry and Bravery. And therefore as the most forcible Motive to encourage us to go confidently for Alms, our Holy Founder very pertinently subjoyns the following Text.*

*Because our Lord made himself Poor for us in this world.]*

N n ij

For

Math. 10. 24.  
M, God, in thee  
is my Confidence,  
let me not  
be Asham'd.  
Ps. 24. 2.  
The Example  
of a poor  
Begging Sa-  
viour drives  
away all sha-  
me from our  
Questors.

You know the

*grace of our  
Lord JESUS-  
CHRIST,  
that for you he  
was made  
Poor, whereas  
he was Rich:  
that by his Po-  
verty you  
might be Rich.  
2. Cor. 8. 9.*

For us he descended from the highest part of Heaven to the time of *Adam*, made himself our Brother, suck'd the dugs of our Mother, spake our tongue, took upon him our semblance, charg'd himself with our burdens, and on himself laid our Miseries to turn them into Felicities. He is that Marchant, who is come out of a happy and rich Country full of treasures, glory and greatness, which were to him more natural than Rays to the Sun; and yet, being lodg'd, as it were, with us in a silly Cottage, has despoil'd himself for us, wholly inebriated with the extasies of Love; has made himself poor to make us rich, weak to strengthen us, contemptible to render us glorious, full of sufferings to beatify us, and a Man that we might be Gods.

Trace his divine Foot-steps, consider the whole Table of his mortal Abode on earth, from his coming into the world to his going out of it, and you will be convinc'd of this Truth. You will observe how every Action of his Life, from the Crib to the Cross, preaches and recommends to the World, nothing else but the Poverty which we make profession of. Behold him born of poor parents, laid in a wretched manger, upon a lock of hay, in another man's stable; bound up in poor ragged swath-bands, without help or attendance, expos'd to the rigor of the Season. Consider him afterwards earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, or begging it from door to door, or living upon Alms freely offer'd him by the Faithful. Lastly, at his going out of the world, see him stript of all his Clothes, hanging naked upon the Cross; and after his taking down, to have neither Winding-sheet nor Sepulchre of his own, to bury his blessed Body in.

This (O my Soul!) is the Life and Death of the wisdom of God, who is the Rule of all our actions; and he has made choice of thee to accompany him, shall thou then be ashamed, and

and not rather account it a glory to be Poor, for the love of a God for thee so despoil'd? O my Lord Jesus! give me leave, I most humbly beseech thee, to partake with thee in thy extreme Poverty. I heartily wish to be enrich'd with this Treasure. I desire, O my Poor and naked Lord, for thy most holy Name sake never to possess any thing of mine own; but in imitation of thee to beg all I stand in need of, and to rest content with a spare and moderate use of other Peoples things for the supply of my little Necessities, so long as I shall be ty'd to this miserable and wretched Body.

§. IX. *This is that Height of the most high Poverty.*] Towit, an intire and compleat Abdication of all Temporals for Christ's sake, both in Particular and in Common, with a streight and penurious use of things express'd in our Rule, and a poor or moderate use of all other things not express'd; depriving us of all that is Superfluous, Precious, or Curious in this world, ioy'n'd with humble Begging. Than which nothing can be Higher; or approaching nearer to Heaven; as transcending in a most super-eminent degree all Earthly things, and trampling them under its feet. *Which has instituted you, my dearest Brethren, Heirs and Kings of the kingdom of Heaven.*] By affording you daily Opportunities of practising those Vertues, that will put you one day into possession of everlasting Happines. And therefore he adds: *It has made you poor in Substance, but exalted you in Vertue.*] In Patience, Mortification, Penance, Modesty, Meekness, Humility, Gratitude, Temperance, Sobriety, Charity, Chastity, Hope and Confidence in God; all Vertues peculiar to the Poor.

Besides, this Queen and Mistress of vertues, Holy Poverty, helps us to master our Capital Enemy, Self-love, together with its *Attendants*, as are Hatred, Aversion, Anger, Revenge, Envy, inordinate Desires, Pride, Vain-glory, &c. All which are fed, nourish'd and pamper'd by Riches and Delights. It cures us of the itch of Ambition, prohibiting us all that is sately, magnificent, specious, and great.

It

Wherein is seated the height of the most high Poverty of I.F. MM.

Blessed are ye Poor: For yours is the Kingdom of God. Luc. 6. 20, Its incomparable Advantages.

It makes us Chast, by depriving us of all that is curious, charming, and delightful to the Senses. It is a remedy against Avarice, allowing us nothing that we can call our Own. It reduces Man in some kind to that blessed state of Innocency, wherein all things were Common, without any propriety, or distinction of Mine and Thine. In fine it makes satisfaction for our Sins, it purify's us from the dregs of the earth, it illustrates the Soul with noble and divine contemplations, sets the Imagination at liberty, takes away the occasion of distractions, and procures us a perfect peace and tranquillity of mind, by dispossessing us of Gold and Silver, the source of so many gnawing Cares, turmoiling Thoughts, Quarrels, Law-suits, &c. Behold the sweet fruits and benedictions, wherewith our sublime Poverty enriches us, exalting us even to Heaven, and rendring us like to the Angels, by freeing us from all that is earthly, gross and material. For these reasons, *I preferr'd her before Kingdoms and Thrones, and Riches I conu'd to be nothing in comparison of her. Neither did I compare the Precious Stone to her; because all Gold in comparison of her is a little Sand; and Silver in the sight of her shall be esteem'd as Clay. Above Health and Beauty did I love her, and propos'd to have her for light; because her light cannot be extinguish'd. And all good things came to me together with her, and very much Honesty by her Hands.*

Sap. 7. 8.

Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Orac. 4.

Our Holy Founder assures us, that this much to be desir'd Treasure of holy Poverty is so excellent and divine, that we are altogether unworthy to be Masters of it. " This is, that celestial Vertue, says he, by which all terrene and, transitory Goods of a deceitful and lying world are scorn'd, and trampil'd under foot; by which all the Impediments, in the path of Vertue and religious Perfection are taken away; by which our Soul sticks close, and is glud, as it  
were,

„ were, to its first Beginning, the Eternal God. This is that  
 „ Vertue, which makes us, being on earth, to converse  
 „ with the Angels in heaven. This is that Vertue, which as-  
 „ sociates us with *Christ* on the Cross, which buries us with  
 „ *Christ* in the Grave, which raises us up with *Christ* in the  
 „ Resurrection, and which makes us accompany *Christ* in  
 „ his Ascension. In fine, this is that heavenly Vertue, which  
 „ communicates to man the dowry of *Agility* even in this  
 „ Mortal life, inabling him to soar above the heavens, with  
 „ the two wings of Humility and Charity, which it imparts  
 „ to all those that truly embrace it.

To conclude, as *Covetousness* is the root of all Evil, 1. Tim. 6. 10  
 according to the Apostle; so is Poverty the source and ori-  
 gine of all Good. And therefore *S. Ambrose* upon the fore-  
 cited words of the Apostle, says, that as Riches are the  
 instruments of all Vices; because they render us capable of  
 putting even our worst desires in execution: So a renuncia-  
 tion of Riches, is the origine and preserver of all Vertues.  
 And hence it is, that Holy Men speaking of this admirable  
 Vertue, call it sometimes the Guardian, at other times the  
 Mother of Vertues; because it produces and nourishes all  
 other vertues in our Souls, and keeps up Regular Discipline  
 in Cloisters. Whence it comes to pass, that those Orders  
 who have little or no regard to holy Poverty, whose Chil-  
 dren they ought to be, scarce retain the face of Religion,  
 since they have left off to resemble their Mother. Our Holy  
 Father *S. Francis* was us'd to call her his Mistress; from  
 whom *S. Clare* also took it, making all those of her Order  
 expressly to say, We oblige ourselves for ever to our Mistress  
 holy Poverty.

O most incomparable Vertue! which art attended with so  
 great blessings, and such advantageous means for our Salvation.  
 O that I could mortify the love of Terrene things to obtain  
 thee.



thee, to possess all things in Almighty God! O my most sweet Master! that cam'st from Heaven, to give us a perfect example hereof, making choice to dye Naked upon a Cross, and to depart this world without possessing any thing of the world. Grant me to embrace holy Poverty in perfection, and so to serve thee, that by abhorring Temporal riches I may obtain Everlasting.

*I have cry'd to  
thee, O Lord,  
I have said :  
Thou art my  
Hope, my Por-  
tion in the land  
of the Living.  
Ps. 141. 6.*

*Let this be your Portion, which leads you into the Land of the Living.*] Since you are contented to possess nothing in the Land of the Dying. *Whereon, my most dearly beloved Brethren, intirely relying, you will never desire to have any other thing under Heaven.*] Than this precious Jewel, this Evangelical Pearl, holy Poverty; for the purchasing of which, you have generously abandon'd and sold all you are worth, Body, Soul, Honours, Riches, Pleasures, &c. *For the Name of our Lord Jesus-Christ.*] Expecting from him your Reward for it. From Jesus, I say, the Summary of all power, the Treasury of all benedictions, the Flower and Quintessence of all contentments, the Sweetness of delights, and the perpetual Banquet of Angels : In whose bosom are all the Store-houses and Magazines of Nature, all the Riches of the Universe; the beauty of Fields, the lustre of Flowers, the fecundity of Fruits, the wealth of Minerals; your *Alpha* and *Omega*, your Beginning and End, your Supreme Felicity, and your All. O Soul really penurious, and worthy of all the miseries on Earth, whom the riches and delights of the Paradise of God cannot suffice, nor such a Jesus content!

O my celestial Spouse! my Soul pants, and thirsts after thee, more than the wearied Stag breaths after the refreshing Fountains. Draw me after thee, O divine Source of all sweetness! and I shall run cheerfully after the odours of thy Perfumes. For what do I seek but thee, or what can satisfy me but thy self, in Heaven or on Earth? O that the memory of Eternal things remain'd always deeply ingraven in my Soul! How easily should I then disdain all temporal and wordly Trifles? O my God, and my All! When shall I be so happy, as to behold thee clearly in thy Heavenly Glory?

§. X. *And wheresoever the Brethren be, and shall meet one another.* ] Of what Convent, Custody, Province, Nation, or Family soever they are; of what Dignity, Rank, Condition, or Reformation; whether Superiour or Inferiour, Learned or Simple, Priest, Clark or Lay-Brother, *Observantine, Recollect, Capucine*, or what ever else. *Let them shew themselves one towards the other as Domesticks.* ] With all love, friendship, familiarity and freedom, as Persons of the same Family, of the same Rule and Profession, and having one common Father and Founder. And for that reason, let them receive with open armes, indifferently, and without distinction of Persons, all the Brethren of the Order whatever, that come to them for Hospitality, even from the remotest parts of the world; entertaining them after the most cordial and obliging manner possible, in the bowels of fraternal Charity, with a sincere Heart, a pleasant and chearful Meen, and giving them the best the poverty and conveniency of the Place will afford. By this free Communication, this tenderness of Affection, this confidence and freedom one with another, they will be known to be my Disciples, and of the number of my Brethren, true *Frier-Minors*, and observers of the Gospel.

Note : Although I have plac'd in my Preface this Text among the Counsels or Admonitions of the Rule, and by consequence not Obligatory by virtue thereof. Yet this hinders not, ( as I also hinted in the same place, and may be instanc'd in a great many Others there set down) but that it may be of Obligation upon another Score; to wit, as a Precept of Charity, according to that of our Saviour: *This is my Commandment, that you love one another, as I have lov'd you.* And therefore *S. Paul* writing to the *Colossians*, after having recommended to them the practice of many Vertues, *But above all things*, says he, *have Charity one with another, which is the bond of all Perfection.*

*A Friend if he continue steadfast, shall be to thee as an Equal, and in them of thy Household shall deal confidently. Eccli. 6. 12.*

1<sup>st</sup> Pet. 4. 8.

Reasons to  
prove the  
Necessity of  
Union and  
Brotherly  
Charity.

S. Peter also expresses the same in his first *Canonical Epistle*, where having touch'd some few heads, *But before all things*, says he, *entertain a continual and mutual Charity one with another*. Whereby we may judge of how great importance it is, that we should always exercise the Spirit of Friendship, Charity and Union, since these great Apostles, these two Princes of the Church, recommend it to us *above and before all things*, Which shews in effect that nothing is more generally necessary, than it; for what Community can ever be form'd, or be able to subsist without it? There is not any Society or Common-wealth in the world, how barbarous soever it be, where there is not some kind of Union, whether they live under one Head, or whether the Government be compos'd of divers Heads. We also see this verifi'd amongst Irrational Creatures, and that not only amongst *Bees*, to which Nature has given an admirable instinct of Union and Order; but even amongst the most savage Beasts, amongst *Wolves* and *Lions*; in which, the same motion that carries them to Self-preservation, moves them also to conserve a certain kind of Union, by a sort of knowledge or instinct they have, that Division will cause their Destruction. It is for the same reason, that even the Devils themselves, who are spirits of Division, and the sowers of cockle and discord, keep a kind of Union among themselves; *For if Satan be divided against himself*, says *Jesus-Christ*, *how will his kingdom stand*? And he confirms it by this *Maxime*, which the Example of all Ages has ever look'd upon as an infallible principle of Policy, *That a Kingdom divided against itself, shall become Desolate*. Wherefore *Plato* says, that there is nothing more pernicious to a Common-wealth, than Discord and Division, nor any thing more useful or profitable, than Peace and a good Understanding amongst the Inhabitants.

The same is observ'd likewise in Military Discipline, where

Mat. 11. 17.

where if the *Battalion* march in order, keep its Ranks, and be so united that all the Souldiers mutually succour one another, remaining always firm in their Posts, it will surmount all obstacles, and vanquish whatsoever opposes itself against its power. This alone makes it invincible, and this secures not only the general good of the whole Body, but the particular good of every Souldier; whereby security or loss, are inseparably united to the Victory or Defeat of the *Battalion*. And for this reason, the Holy Ghost speaking of the Church, says, that it is *Terrible as an Army rang'd in Battel*. It will not therefore be possible to break through this *Battalion*, if it be always well United, if the Souldiers remain in an exact Discipline, and always firmly keep their Ranks; because it is by this means, and after this manner they defend one another: But if they come to be disunited, it will be presently broken, and intirely defeated.

*Cant. 6. 3.*

*S. Hierom* in his Monastical Rules, after a more forcible manner, says also the same thing of a Religious Life: It is Charity, says he, that makes Religious, and assembles them under one and the same Discipline and Government; without this, Monasteries are a Hell, and those that are in them Devils; but with this, Monasteries become a Paradiſe upon earth, and their Inhabitants Angels incarnate. And to speak truth, what greater Hell can we imagine, than to be continually together, and always to have different Wills and Judgments, opposite one to another? When on the other side, what is the living in union of Wills, but to live the life of an Angel here below, and to begin to tast in this World, the peace and tranquillity they enjoy in Heaven? This truth is confirm'd by *S. Basil*, when speaking of Religious, he says, those that live in the true spirit of a Community, imitate in a manner the lives of Angels, amongst which there are no Law-suits, no Disputes, no Quarrels. And *S. Laurence Justinian* affirms, that nothing in this world

*Behold how good and pleasing a thing it is for Brethren to live together in Union.*  
*Pf. 132. 1.*

*Const. Monast. cap. 19.*

*Disc. & profess. Monast. Con- ver. c. 10.*

Gen. 18. 16.

world so represents that admirable Assembly of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, as a Society of Religious, who are perfectly united together by Charity. The life they lead is truly Heavenly and Angelical: *Our Lord is truly amongst them: The place they live in, is no other than the House of God, and Gate of Heaven.* For what can we figure to ourselves, more pleasant, happy, and admirable, than to see men of divers Nations, so different in their Birth, Education, Inclination, Mind and Humour, and yet to be so strictly united by an exact resemblance of Manners and Discipline, that they seem to have but one Mind in divers Bodies, and that in like manner many different Bodies become the instruments of one only Mind? Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let us use all possible means to maintain in the Order this friendly Union, this brotherly Concord, by shewing ourselves upon all occasions, both at home and abroad, as true Domesticks one towards the other.

*A faithful Friend, is a strong Protection. A faithful Friend, is the Medecine of Life and Immortality. Eccli. 6. 14, 16. Prov. 18. 19. Eccli. 4. 12.*

*And every one securely manifest to each other his Necessity.]* As well Corporal as Spiritual, confidently, sincerely, cordially; imparting to his Brother his Affairs, his Wants, his Cares, his Troubles, Doubts, Scruples, Temptations, Actions, Passions, Joys, Sorrows, &c. pouring all this into the bosom of his Friend, whereby he shall receive an inestimable benefit; *For the Brother that is assisted by his Brother is a strong City,* says the Wise-Man; *And a Triple Cord is hardly broken.* All the little Threads, of which the string of a Cross-bow is made, are very weak of themselves, if taken one by one; yet notwithstanding when they are united and interlac'd one with another, they are able to bend a Bow of steel. Thus powerful will every private Religious be in his own Defence, able to withstand temptations, drive away sorrow, moderate his passions, repel calumnies, encounter his adversaries, resolve on affairs, &c. when assisted by his Brother, and united to him by the bond of Fraternal Charity.

⑥

O what Sweetness, O what an Atome of the Life of the Blessed, is this Communication of Brethren one with another ! what contentment to see a poor afflicted Religious man, who was as a Cloud surcharg'd with stormis and darkness, to free himself and become bright by the aspect of the beams, which reflect from the eyes of his spiritual Brother and Friend, to clear up at the words which come from his lips, to receive wholesom Advice, which puts in order things confus'd, gives vigor to the languishing, comfort in affliction, and Hope amidst Despairs ! O my God, Author of all holy Affections, give me this amiable society, this friendly conversation, full of liberty, freedom and confidence, towards all my Brethren.

*For if a Mother do's nourish and love her Carnal Son, how much more tenderly ought a Man to love and nourish his Spiritual Brother ?* ] By how much Spiritual Brotherhood in a higher degree transcends Carnal: For as *S. Ambrose* assures us, Brotherhood in *Jesus-Christ*, is far more excellent than that of Blood; because the one may perhaps produce some likeness of Body, but the other produces a likeness and union both of Heart and Soul, according to what is written in the *Acts* of the Apostles 4.32. *That the Multitude of the Believers had but one Heart and one Soul.* Which so came to pass by the means of Charity; whose property, says *S. Denis*, is to joyn and unite things together; for which reason *S. Paul* calls it the *Bond of Perfection*, which assembles, and unites things that are most divided; making of many Wills only one, and causing me to desire that for another, which I desire for myself, by making me to love him as myself; which also makes me look on my Friend as my Second Self, and on me as a Second Self to him; and infine, makes us two to be only one; according to that expression of the *Poet*, who call'd his Friend the one half of his Soul, as if he and his Friend had had but one Soul that animated both their Bodies. But let us here consider a little more attentively this Example, and observe the

*As if a Nurse should cherish her Children: So having a desire to you, we would gladly deliver to you not only the Gospel, but also our own Souls: Because you are become most dear to us.*  
*1. Thes. 2. 7.*  
*Amb. serm. 9.*  
 Spiritual Brotherhood more excellent than Carnal.  
*Coloss. 3. 14.*

the Tenderness of a Parent towards her Little one, the better to draw from hence the Moral, intended by our Holy Founder for our Instruction.

The affection of a Carnal Mother shews what the tenderness of a Spiritual Brother ought to be.

Behold in the first place, how this Carnal Mother contributes all she is, or has, in the world most precious and dear, even her own Substance, converting it into Milk to suckle her Child. See how watchful and solicitous she is to defend it from all dangers, hurts, incommodities of heat, cold, wind, rain; cherishing it, and hugging it in her Bosom: With what diligence and care she makes it clean when it has beray'd itself, without any loathsomeness or distast: With what patience and unspeakable mildness she endures its cries and importunities both night and day; using all possible, but sweet means, to pacify it. Sometimes giving it her Breast to suck, at other times charming it with her Voice, and sometimes rocking it to Sleep, and then watching by it with much joy and satisfaction. If the Father, at any time too severe, threaten to strike or correct it, she presently steps in between, and becomes its Mediatrix to appease the Father's wrath, and save the Child. And lastly, as it grows up, she turns all her thoughts towards providing it good Education, to place it one day either in Religion to give a *Samuel* to the Altar, or in some honourable Employment in the world to afford a profitable Member to the Common-weakh. And all this out of pure Love and Tenderness to her dear Child, without any hopes of recompence or reward for the same, but only the satisfaction to have done Good to one whom she Loves.

The practice of Brotherly Love.

Now do you to your Spiritual Brother all this in a certain Proportion, and you will have discharg'd your Duty towards him. First, use all possible endeavours to cultivate and entertain a Brotherly Correspondence with him, a sweet and obliging Communication of Mutual Offices, in place of the Milk which the Mother gives to her Child. It is a most commendable

**S. X.**      *Their Affection to one another.*      295.

commendable thing in Religious Persons to be officious, serviceable, and always ready to content every Body; because hereby we shew that we have the spirit of Charity, Humility, and Mortification; instead of shewing the contrary; when out of an unwillingness to mortify ourselves, or to undergo the least pain, or lose the least moment of our pleasure, we cannot find in our hearts to please and oblige our Brethren, nor accommodate ourselves to them. Secondly, promote upon all occasions your Brothers Interest, with the same diligence and care you do your Own. Rejoyce at his good fortune, be sorry for his bad: If he offend you, or you him, be presently reconcil'd to each other. Let no Antipathy or natural Aversion, no difference of Humours, distinction of Country alienate your Affections from him. Let no factions, partialities, fears, suspicious jealousies make you dissident of each other; nor any grudges, or injuries formerly receiv'd shut up your bowels against him. Refuse him nothing that is in your power to grant; conceive a good opinion of his Person; set a just value and estimation upon his Merits; speak honourably of him, excuse his imperfections, compassionate his weakness, bear with his failings, prevent him in Civilities, and do nothing to hinder or diminish the Confidence he ought to have towards you. And all this, out of no other Motive, but because he is your Brother, not Carnal but Spiritual: For whom to do less than for your Carnal Brother, would be no small confusion to you; Spiritual Affinity, as was said, being much more excellent than that of Flesh and Blood, as the Soul is than the Body, and Religion than Nature.

O most Amiable God! thou art Charity, and he that remains in Charity, remains in thee, and thou in him. O divine Love! O thrice happy State! Lord, give me this Love, draw my will powerfully by thy grace, to love in the first place thine own Goodnesses, Greatnesses, Glories with a supernatural liking of them.



them for thine own dear Sake; and in the next, all my Spiritual Brethren, as shadows of thy Goodness, and lively images of thy Greatness; thine own Adoptive Children bought at the price of thy precious blood, and graciously design'd by thy immense Charity to be partakers together with me of thy Heavenly Paradise. O shall it ever enter into my heart to hate, or offend any the least of them! No, my Lord, I love them all most cordially in thee, and for thee. Be they vicious, envious, ulcerated, ugly, they are still dear to me, being my Fellow-Brethren, Frier-Minors, all bound together by the same Rule, Vows, and Profession, and therefore most deserving Objects of my Affections. Confirm me, O Lord Jesus, in this Brotherly Charity, that loving all my Brethren truly and sincerely in this world, I may deserve to enjoy together with them thy Love in the world to come.

*We that are the stronger, must sustain the Infirmitie of the weak.*  
Rom. 15. 1.

*Understand by thy Self what thy Neighbours things are.*  
Eccli. 31. 18.  
Math. 7. 12.  
Luc. 6. 31.

The Obligation of assisting our sick Brethren illustrated by the example of the members of a man's Body.

§. XL. *And if any of them shall fall into any Infirmitie.* ] Whether Spiritual, or Corporal. *The other Brethren.* ] Principally those, whom the Superiour shall appoint to tend upon him. *Ought to serve him.* ] Not as Mercenaries, who serve more for Gain than Affection; but faithfully and sincerely, with true Brotherly Love, full of tenderness and compassion, though his Distemper be never so Contagious; affording him all possible comfort and assistance both for Body and Soul. *As themselves would be serv'd.* ] According to our Saviour's golden Rule: *Whatsoever you will that Men do to you, do you the same to them.* Meet your Brother the same Measure, you would have meet'd to you. For God will, says *S. Hierom*, that we have the same feeling of our Neighbours afflictions, as of our own; and that after the same manner as we desire to be reliev'd, were we under the like troubles, so we fail not to succour them in theirs. Nature teaches us this, in the union and correspondence there is between the Members of a Man's Body, where every Part mutually helps and serves each other in time of Need: The Eyes direct the Feet; the Hands defend the Head; and all joyntly endeavour to succour and help the weakest Part;

as

as Experience sufficiently shews us, when we have receiv'd any hurt or incommodity. There is such a *Sympathy* betwixt each Member, that the Stomack for example cannot be out of order, but also the Head suffers and feels it, and helps to relieve it. *All the Members interest themselves one for another*, says the Apostle. *The pain of one Communicates itself to all the rest; and is no sooner cur'd, but all the others are eas'd and comforted.* S. Austin explicates this perfectly well. It happens, says he, that the Foot treads upon a Thorn: What is more remote from the Eyes than the Feet? It is indeed by situation very far off, but 'tis very near by the mutual and charitable Correspondence with all the rest of the Members. Wherefore as soon then as the Foot is prick'd with the Thorn; the Eyes presently go to find it out, the Body stoops to facilitate their approach, the Tongue asks where it is, and the Hands endeavour to pull it out. Yet the Eyes, the Hand, the Body, the Head, and the Tongue are all very well, and ail nothing, and the Foot itself is only hurt in one place: It is therefore because all the Members are solicitous one for another, and feel the pain the others suffer. Behold after what manner we ought to carry ourselves towards our Brethren; we ought to have as great a Care of them as we have of ourselves; we ought to succour, relieve, and assist them in their necessities; and their misfortunes, sufferings, and afflictions ought to be no less Sensible to us than our own.

From this Principle I deduce, what Expositors generally hold upon this Text, which Superiours as well as Inferiours will please to take notice of, To wit, that they both may grievously offend, not only against the Rule, but likewise against the Natural and Divine Law, if they be considerably failing in the Care of their sick Brethren committed to their trust. And first as to Superiours, they will have much to answer for, if themselves in Person do not often visit their

P p

Sick

The obligation of Superiours in this point.

Sick Brethren : If according to their ability, and quantity of Alms, they do not provide them with all Conveniencies futable to the nature of their Distemper : If they do not admonish, and correct those Infirmarians they find negligent in their charge : If they do not graciously condescend to the reasonable and just requests and desires of their afflicted languishing Subjects; and as much as ly's in them, endeavour charitably and piously to comfort them in our Lord, as a tender Father his dearly beloved Children.

The Duty or Office of Infirmarians.

And thus much in general for Superiours. But as for what relates to Infirmarians, or those to whose immediate care the Sick are intrusted, we will here for their farther Instruction, somewhat more nicely examine this point, and descending to particulars, shew them how they ought to behave themselves towards their Sick Brethren; prosecuting the Comparifon betwixt ourselves and our Brethren, when it shall please God to visit us with Sicknes.

*By charity serve one another: For all the Law is fulfill'd in one word; Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself. Gal. 5. 13. The Prayer of him that Curses thee in the bitterness of his Soul, shall be heard. Eccli. 4. 6.*

First, when you are Sick, you desire to have some Body deputed for your service, to be always near you to take care of you, and help you to what you want; some mild, sweet, diligent, skilful, and compassionate Infirmarian : Be you such an one then to your Sick Brother, when Obedience shall call you to that charitable and meritorious Office.

Secondly, when you are Sick, you desire that all the world should believe you to be really so, and that you suffer more than any Body can imagine. And if any one should be so rash and uncharitable as to say, You play the Hypocrite, are Nice and Impatient, and that you complain a great deal more than you need, you would be highly offended : Take care then you do not the like in your Sick Brothers regard; lest he wish you may suffer what he endures, and God hear his prayer.

*Comfort also.*

Thirdly, when you are Sick, you desire to have your  
Broths,

§. XI. *Their Care of their Sick.* 299

Broths, Pissanes, Syrups, Electuaries, &c. diligently prepar'd, and given you in good order; your Ordures, ill Savours, Stenches, and whatever is Noisom about you, to be charitably endur'd: Your Peevishness, Impatience, provoking Language, your Murmurings, and extravagant Expressions to be excus'd, and imputed to the violence of your Pains, and the want of preseneness of Mind: Do you the like in your Sick Brother's behalf; be diligent and quick in helping him to what he stands in need of, bear with his infirmities, excuse his failings, give him good words, his Sicknes is a sufficient Burden, 'tis cruelty to add any thing to it; and disdain not, but with cheerfulness perform all the most vile and lothsom Offices about his person.

We read in Histories of delicate and tender young Women, who having inconsiderately marry'd to Husbands worn out with Maladies, perceiving from the first night of their Nuptials, unguents, ulcers, and evil savours; and finding a counterfeit health in bodies, more fit for a Tomb than a Marriage-bed, yet have not abandon'd them, but lov'd, honour'd, and serv'd them, watching sometimes forty Days and forty Nights about their Beds, never disarraying themselves. Some one Man has been found among others, whose indisposition drawing along with it seven Years together the stench of wounds that were incurable, the horrible infirmity of Members which appear'd wholly disfigur'd, did weaken all the forces of those who were willing to assist him, overthrow the patience of the most faithful, wasted the charity of the most zealous, yea even such as do all for Money, abhorr'd to come near him. And yet a young Maiden has been seen of Sixteen Years of Age, weak of complexion, handsom of body, and endow'd with a beauty which the most flourishing Husbands would have cover'd, to ty herself to this Dead body, to fix it, touch it, cleanse it, to

*feeble-minded,  
Support the  
weak, be Pa-  
tient to all.  
1. Thess. 5. 14.*

give it broths, to blow the powder of herbs into the Nostrils of it, which distill'd an humour insupportable to all the world, and to cut its Beard and Hair, when no body would undertake this adventure.

Now, my dear Brother Infirmarian, think with yourself, if Carnal Affection were able to work such wonders in the Weaker Sex; what may be expected from your Brotherly Charity, from a Spiritual Ty impos'd upon you by a Precept of your Rule, which you in your Profession oblig'd yourself to observe? Wherefore embrace this Office with alacrity; and if you desire to render the practice of it easy and delightful to you, follow the excellent Advice which S. Bonaventure gives you for the discharge of your obligation in this point. When a Servant of God, says he, sees his Sick brother on Bed, it seems to him that he there beholds his Saviour, and by that means nothing is loathsome, nothing abominable, nothing shameful or dishonourable to him; but quite contrary, every thing appears delightful, sweet, pleasant, amiable; because the Service he yields to his Brother, he perswades himself, is done to his beloved Spouse. And again: Who from henceforth will abhor a Leper; decline a Sick Man, refuse to comfort a disconsolate Person, when in all this he considers and looks upon *Christ*? Is there any thing in the world able to discourage and deject a man, or that can seem tedious, difficult, and noisome to him, who has these Considerations well fix'd in his heart?

*Want not in consolation to them that Weep, and walk with them that Mourn. Be not loth to Visit the Sick: For by*

Fourthly, when you are Sick, you desire to be visited sometimes, and are glad to see your Brethren; hoping to receive from them some comfort in your Afflictions, some pious or recreative discourse to help to pass away the Time; and it is a Satisfaction to you, to see that you are not wholly forgotten and neglected by them. Thus much common Civility at least, and humane Friendship may seem to require; for

for though it be not in our power to restore a Sick Friend to his Health, yet our Presence, with a kind Offer of our service, and hearty Wishes contribute not a little toward easing his afflicted Mind. Do you the like then to your Sick Brother, with Superiours leave; at such times as you know your Presence will be acceptable to him.

*these things thou shalt be confirm'd in Love Eccli. 7. 38.*

Lastly, when you are Sick, you desire the Prayers of all the world, especially those of your own Brethren, to help you to obtain patience and resignation to Gods most holy will, worthily to receive the Rites of the Church, to be able to withstand the violence of your Distemper, to resist Temptations and the assaults of the Devil, to obtain remission of your Sins, final Perseverance, and the crown of Glory. Beg all this with great fervour for your Sick Brother, who then is less able to pray for himself. Assist devoutly with the Community at his receiving the *Viaticum*, and *Extream-Unc-tion*. Think on him Night and Day; offer up your exercises of piety, and meritorious works for his Relief; and let nothing be wanting, wherein you may any way contribute to his comfort.

*Pray one for another, that you may be Sav'd: For the continual Prayer of the Just Man avails much. Jac. 5. 16. In the repose of the Dead make the memory of him to rest; and comfort him in the De-parting of his Spirit. Eccli. 38. 24.*

O my Soul! if thou lov'st thy Brother as Thyself, shew him thy kindness during his Sickness, in the sincere practice of all these Particulars. Do as thou would'st be done by, and thou shalt experience the like, either from him or some other charitable person, when thou stand'st in need thyself. Think it is a Blessing from God, to be chosen by thy Superiour out of the whole Community to tend thy sick Brother, since this infirm Creature is the Image of God, thine own proper Flesh, ally'd to thee under the same Habit and Rule, in the same Fraternity, and Co-heir with thee in *Jesus-Christ*; to whom thou render'st Duties, which perhaps at this time seem Thorns to thee, but shall one day be Crowns.

§. XII. Hitherto of the Tenders of the Sick; we will now speak a word or two of the Sick themselves, and shew how

*Instructions for the Sick*

how they are to behave themselves in their Infirmaries during the time of their Sicknes, so to dispose them for their last Ends. To which purpose it is here in the first place to be observ'd, that although our Holy Founder in This, and in the IV. Chapter of his Rule, give a strict charge, as a pious and indulgent Father, to have a special care taken of his Sick Brethren: Yet his intention is, says *Hugo of Dina* upon the present Text, that this care and service which he here requires of us towards one another, be Religious; that is, that it be regulated and squar'd according to the strict Poverty of his Order, with regard to the Sick Person and the nature of his Distemper, after the manner of *Poor People*. Now as a Poor Man when he is Sick, covets not what belongs to Lords and great Persons of the world, who seldom fail in their Infirmities to have all their Hearts can desire, and can be got for Love or Money, the best Attendance, the ablest Advice, the choicest Remedies, the richest Cordials: None of all which a Poor Man so much as thinks of, but rather considers those of his own Rank, satisfy'd with the same Lot; knowing very well that it is the part of Poor People to be content with mean, vulgar, and moderate things, to be priv'd of a hundred conveniencies which the Rich enjoy, and to suffer sometimes even the want of Necessaries, and to bear this want with a willing Mind. So ought a Poor *Frier-Minor* to carry himself, and generously to abandon by virtue and election, for the love of God, and out of a motive of Holy Poverty, what remedies, comforts, satisfactions and conveniencies Sensual Nature may suggest to him contrary to his Vow. And therefore our Holy Founder in his X. Chapter below, admonishes all his Sick Brethren, and piously exhorts them in our Lord to have *Humility* and *Patience* in their Infirmities, as a sovereign Remedy against Nizeness, and the over great care of our corporal Health.

Secondly,

Secondly, what greatly to be recommended to our Sick, is, that they endeavour to procure an intire submission and conformity to the Divine Will, desiring nothing more than that his heavenly Pleasure be accomplish'd; that so whether Sick or Well, they may be always intirely his. That they be pious and devout, edifying, meek, cheerful amidst their Sufferings and Pains; considering that as Health is a gift of God, so is Sicknes also; and that God sends it us, for our triall and correction, the better to make us sensible of our weakness, to disabuse us of those mighty thoughts we conceiv'd of ourselves, to cut us off from the love of Terrene things, and the pleasures of our Senses; to beat down their efforts, and diminish the insurrections of our greatest enemy the Flesh; to put us in mind we are here in a place of Exile, and that Heaven is our real Country; and infine, for several other Advantages, which we may obtain by receiving it as a Present from his Hand. *A great Sicknes makes an Understanding Soul*, said the Wise Man. And an Ancient Father of the Desert said to one of his Disciples, who was Sick: My Son, be not troubl'd at this Sicknes; on the contrary give God thanks: For it is a Fire which purges all your Rust, if you are Iron; and purifies you, if you are Gold. It is a sign of a great Piety and perfect Vertue, to thank God for all the Infirmities he pleases to send us.

Our blessed Redeemer suffer'd *Lazarus*, whom he lov'd tenderly, to fall into a violent Sicknes; to teach us, that the Bodies of God's Favourites are not free from Infirmities; and that to make Saints, they must not enjoy too much Health. Our Body, says *S. Maximus* is the Bed of our Soul, where it sleeps too easily in continual Health, and forgets itself in many things: But a good round Sicknes does not only move, but turn over this Bed, which makes the Soul awake, to think on her Salvation, and make a total

Conversion.

*Lord, thy will  
be done on  
Earth, as it is  
in Heaven.  
Math. 6. 10.  
As it has pleas'd  
our Lord,  
so be it done:  
The Name of  
our Lord be  
Blessed. Job  
1. 21.  
It is good for  
me, that thou  
hast humbl'd  
me. Ps. 118. 71.*

*Eccli. 31. 26.*



Conversion. It is true, that Health is the prime Jewel we possess, and the very best of all Temporal goods; without it, all Honours are, as the beams of an Ecclips'd Sun; Riches are unpleasing, and all Pleasures are languishing: But, what profit is there for Eternity in that Health, which serves for a provocation to sin, for an enticement to worldly pleasure, and for a gate to death? The best Souls are never better nor stronger, than when their Bodies are Sick; their Diseases are too hard for their mortal Bodies, but their Courage is invincible. It is a great and goodly knowledge to understand our own Infirmities: Prosperity keeps us from the view of them, but Adversity shews them to us. We should hardly know what Death is, if so many Diseases did not teach us every day that we are Mortal. *Semiramis*, the proudest of all Queens, had made a Law, whereby she was to be ador'd instead of all the Gods, but being humbl'd by a great Sickness, she acknowledg'd herself to be but a Woman.

*He that takes  
not his Cross,  
and follows  
me, is not  
worthy of me.  
Math. 10 38.  
By many Tri-  
bulations we  
must enter into  
the kingdom of  
God. Act. 14.  
21.*

If you will be the Children of God, you must make it appear by participation of his Cross, and by suffering Tribulation. By that Sun, our Eagle tries his young ones; he who cannot abide that shining Ray spring'd with Blood, shall never attain to Beatitude. Tribulation is the Kings Highway, beaten and track'd with the sacred steps of our dear Master, the Father of sufferings, and King of the afflicted, *Christ Jesus*, who in the great sacrifice of Patience made in the beginning of Ages, supply's the person of a great Bishop, putting on Flesh wholly imprinted with dolours, a Heart drench'd in acerbities, a Tongue steep'd in gall; round about him, are all the most elevated and courageous Souls, who all wear his Livery, and both constantly and gloriously dispose themselves to this great Model of dolours. Would we at the sight of so many brave Champions, who have made their Afflictions

Afflictions the degrees of their Glory, lead a life lazy, languishing and corrupt, amidst Honours, Riches and Pleasures, in an uninterrupted state of Health? Know we not that all Creatures of the world groan and bring forth, that all the Elements are in travail, and in a ceaseless agitation? The Air itself, say *Philosophers*, is perpetually stricken with the motion of heaven, as with a hammer or whip, that this benumm'd Mass may not hatch any poison. Rivers are cleans'd and purify'd by the streaming current of their waters. The Earth is never in repose, and the Nature of great things is generously to suffer evils. The Clock go's on by the help of its counterpoise, and Christian Life never proceeds in Vertue, but by the counter-balance of its Crosses. Our Souls are engag'd by Oath to this warfare, so soon as we enter into Christianity: Suffering is our Trade, our Vow, our Profession. Love, which cannot suffer, is not Love, and if it cease to love when it should bear, it never was what it profess'd. Wherefore let us conclude with that excellent Advice of *S. Paul*, *Not so forget the Consolation, which speaks to you, as it were to Children,* *saying. My Son, neglect not the Discipline of our Lord; Neither be thou weary'd whilst thou art rebuk'd of him. For whom our Lord loves, he chastizes; and he scourges every Child that he receives. Persevere ye in Discipline: As to Children do's God offer himself to you; for what Son is there, whom the Father do's not correct? But if you be without Discipline, whereof all be made partakers; then are you Bastards, and not Children. Moreover the Fathers indeed of our Flesh we had for Instructors, and we did reverence them: Shall we not much more obey the Father of Spirits, and live? And they indeed for a time of few days, according to their Will instructed us: But he, so that which is profitable in receiving of his Sanctification. And*

Heb. 12. 5.

*all Discipline indeed for the present seems not to be of Joy, but of Sorrow : But afterward it will render to them that are exercis'd by it, most peaceable fruits of Justice.*

Wherefore [O my Soul!] in thy Afflictions do not trouble nor discompose thyself, be not impatient, but quiet, obedient and content under the hand of God. O what rare Vertues, and of how great edification in time of Sicknes, are Meekness, Patience, and Obedience to the will of God ! Complain little, desire less, refuse nothing. Be not over-curious in thy Diet, over-tender of thy Treaty, nor over-sollicitous for thy Health : Leave all to God with a childish simplicity and sincerity, taking him for thy Father, Physician and Friend; who loves thee and takes care of thee. O happy Sufferings of this life, by which we are made like to our Lord Jesus ! I will not, dear Lord, for never so much be priviledg'd or exempted from them; for being thy Servant, it will be a very great Honour for me, to walk by the same way my Lord and Master walk'd. O my most loving Redeemer, I do here readily offer myself to embrace what part of the Cross ( *Taking the Crucifix into thy hand and kissing it* ) it shall please thee to assign me, and to drink such a Potion as thou shalt prescribe, be it never so Bitter; for it being ordain'd by thy Wisdom and Providence, it will doubtless be very profitable and necessary for me.

It appears from hence, how much those Nice and Impatient ones are to be blam'd, who at the approach of the least Indisposition, presently desist from all religious Duties, and think of nothing else but their Bodies. They use all possible endeavours to cure their Corporal infirmities, little solicitous for those of the Soul; and abide a thousand Vexations, which are but too certain, to recover a Health, which is most uncertain. They pick quarrels at the Air; the Winds, the Seasons, and there is scarce a Day clear enough for them. They beware of Planets and Moons as great Enemies, and fear the Serene as if it were some flying Serpent, which came to rob them of their Life. They observe very nice distinctions in their Diet : This meat is Windy, that lies heavy

A word to the Nice.

*In his Sicknes he had not recourse to our Lord, but rather trusted in the Art of Physicians. 2. Paralip. 15. 12.*

heavy upon the Stomack ; one do's the Head harm , another is very hurtful to the Breast , one breeds Melancholy , another ingenders Choler , another gives them the Heart-burn ; and a hundred other things there are , which though Nature has appointed for Man's food , that do not agree with their Constitutions ; governing themselves according to the prescriptions of Self-love , their Body's chief Physician and Procurator General. Heat , Cold , Moisture , Drought , Travail are Hostilities with them , against which they proclaim open War. They seek for Remedies from all hands , send for Drugs so long , untill they have made an Apothecary's shop of their Belly's. They tire out Superiours , become burthensom to their Tenders . troublesom to Themselves ; and unwilling to suffer any thing , and unmindful of their Profession , murmur and repine if they have not all they desire. You would say , they had made *Epicurus's* Vow , which is never to have any Trouble , nor would they ever be dispens'd with in it. They dandle and hug their Body , and afford it all the satisfaction it is capable of . thinking by that means to give true contentment to the Mind. It takes up all their Thoughts , it is their Study night and day , the Center of their wishes , the only Subject of their discourse and entertainments. They are as solicitous and intent upon the Preservation of it , as if the whole *Species* of Mankind were to be extinguish'd in them. And many times rather choose to transgress Gods ten Commandments , than fail in one of *Hippocrates's* Aphorisms ; so inamour'd they are of their stinking Carcasse , which is presently to become the food of Worms. I leave you to think , what Death were not much sweeter , than Life so slavishly preserv'd ; and whether a Man that fears nothing else but the loss of his bodily Health , and is content to purchase it at so dear a Rate , do's not deserve to be everlastingly Sick ? If you speak to them of the other World , they know not

Qqij                      what

what you mean. They promise themselves, though sick to Death, the years of *Masbusalem*; and then only begin to think seriously on their last End, when they are scarce sensible of what they are going about. And commonly die with so much reluctancy and unwillingness, that a Man would say, they had converted the Lights of an immortal Spirit wholly into Flesh, preferring this World before the other, Time before Eternity, and their Body before their Soul.

Now if there be any such Brethren to be found among us, let them hear *S. Bernard* speak in his 321. Epistle, where among other things he says: To buy Drugs, to run after Physicians, to take Physick, ill becomes a Religious Calling, and is opposite to its Perfection. Especially as to our Order, it neither agrees with its Honour, nor with its Purity. For all these things the *Gentils* do seek after: But we know, that those who live according to the Flesh, cannot please God. Wherefore let us provide ourselves of spiritual Remedies against our spiritual Diseases; let us seek after a potion of Humility, and cry out with our whole heart: Heal my Soul, O Lord, because I have sinn'd against thee. This kind of Health, most beloved Brethren, let us endeavour to procure, this let us hunt after, and this let us use all possible means to preserve, *Because the Health of Man is vain.*

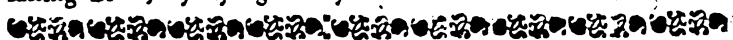
*Ps. 59. 13.*

*1. Reg. c. 16.*

Our Holy Founder likewise upon this Subject puts us in mind of our Duty, in the following manner. "I intreat my Sick Brother, says he, to render thanks to his Creator, for all things, and such as our Lord would have him, such let him desire to be, whether Sick or Well. For all those whom God has pre-ordain'd for Life Everlasting, he tries with Scourges, Afflictions and Infirmities, instructing them in the spirit of Compunction, as it is said in the *Apocalyps. Whom I love, I correct and chastise.* But if

„ if he suffers himself to be mov'd, and carry'd away with  
 „ anger and impatience, either against God, or his Brother;  
 „ or with too great sollicitude seek after Medicines to revive  
 „ his dying Body, which is an Enemy to the Soul, it pro-  
 „ ceeds from the evil Spirit, and he is Carnal, and not-to  
 „ be reckon'd among the number of my Brethren, because  
 „ he loves his Body, more than his Soul.

O God of my Life and Death! I do intirely resign myself up into  
 thy hands to be dispos'd of according to thy blessed will, for  
 Time and Eternity; and do absolutely renounce all superfluous  
 care of the Body, and inordinate desire of this transitory Life;  
 being indifferent to Sickneis or Health, to Life or Death, to  
 Comforts or Crosses, as it shall please thy Divine Majesty.  
 This one thing only I humbly beseech thee, so to govern my  
 Life, and so to sweeten my Death, that whilst I live, I may  
 live only for thee, and when I die, that I may enter into Ever-  
 lasting Bliss, by dying in thy blessed Love and Favour.



## Of Penance

to be injoy'n'd the Brethren that offend.

### CHAP. VII.

*If any of the Brethren, by the instigation of the Ene-  
 my, shall sin Mortally; for those Sins, concerning which  
 it shall be ordain'd amongst the Brethren, that they have  
 Recourse only to the Provincial Ministers; let the foresaid  
 Brethren be bound to have Recourse to them, as soon as they  
 can without Delay. And let the Ministers, if they be Priests,  
 injoy'n them Penance With Mercy: But if they be not Priests,  
 let them cause it to be injoy'n'd by other Priests of the Order,  
 as it shall seem according to God most expedient to them.  
 And they must take heed that they be not angry, nor trou-  
 bl'd for the Sin of any one; because Anger and Trouble hin-  
 der Charity in themselves and others.*

THE

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| <p><i>I. Who have power to reserve Cases in the Order; and of the Obligation which the Brethren have to recur to Superiours for Absolution from the same.</i></p> <p><i>II. The Motives for making speedily this Recourse.</i></p> <p><i>III. That the Ministers injoy their Brethren Penance with Sweetness and Clemency.</i></p> | <p><i>IV. Why is it convenient, if the Ministers be not Priests, that they cause it to be injoynd by other Priests of the Order.</i></p> <p><i>V. What Sins are now Reserv'd in the Order,</i></p> <p><i>VI. Who has Power to absolve from them.</i></p> <p><i>VII. That Superiours in their corrections beware of Anger.</i></p> <p><i>VIII. And also of Trouble.</i></p> |
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## THE EXPOSITION.

*Son, hast thou sinn'd? Do so no more; But for the Old also pray that they may be forgiven thee. Eccli. xi. 1.*

Superiours, only assembl'd in Chapters, have power to reserve Cases. To whom the Brethren are bound to have recourse.

**S. I.** IF any of the Brethren, by the instigation of the Enemy, shall sin Mortally. ] Reservation of Cases (whereof this Chapter treats) always supposing some grievous Offence. For those Sins, concerning which it shall be ordain'd amongst the Brethren. ] The Superiours assembl'd in their General or Provincial Chapters. That they have Recourse only to the Provincial Ministers. ] For Absolution from the said Reserv'd Cases, and injoyning condign Penance for the same. Let the foresaid Brethren be bound. ] By vertue of this Precept under Mortal Sin. To have Recourse to them. ] Either immediately to the Provincials themselves, or else to their Delegates; according as it shall be appointed by the Brethren or Vocals assembl'd in the foresaid Chapters; to whom it belongs to prescribe, both the substance and the form or manner of this Recourse, as to the circumstances, How, When, for What, and to Whom. To these, I say, the Brethren are oblig'd to recur for Absolution

olution and Penance, so often as they fall by the suggestion of the Enemy into such Offences; as to Persons the most prudent and knowing, the most charitable and zealous, and the most able, by reason of their Authority, to remedy such disorders and enormous Crimes; which otherwise would tend to the utter ruine and destruction of Regular Discipline, to the dishonour of Religion, and in the end draw down the vengeance of God upon the Provinces and Convents of the Order.

S. II. *As soon as they can without Delay.* With all convenient Speed; to deliver themselves from so deplorable a state, as is that of Mortal Sin; which deprives them of the merit and reward of all their good actions; which ruins reputation, soils the glory of an innocent life, and leaves a character of infamy; which overthrows bodily health, good grace; which opens the gates of sudden and unexpected death; which makes Man blind, dumb, deaf, senseless, stupid, savage, and many times furious and enraged by the Remorse of Conscience; which despoils a Soul of all the graces, beauties, excellencies, priviledges, love, familiarity, favour of God, hope of life and salvation; which kills it, and rends it more cruelly than a Tyger, or Panther; that a life of God was needful to take away the blemish, so infinitely hainous it is; and that if a Soul be spotted with it at the hour of death, an Eternity of flames cannot deliver her. "Wherefore, my Brethren, says our Holy Father, let us use all possible means to fly from Mortal Sin. Consider and think, with yourselves, how foul and abominable a Dead Body is, destitute of its vital Spirit; and know that the Soul in Mortal Sin, is much more foul and unclean without God, who is the Soul of our Soul. If one Creature so much wants the help of another, how much more do's the Creature stand in need of its Creatour? There is a far greater distance

*Therefore hat  
our Lord dis-  
honour'd the  
congregations  
of the Evil, and  
has destroy'd  
them even to  
the end. Eccli-  
10. 16.*

*Slack not to be  
Converted to  
our Lord, and  
deser not from  
day to day. For  
his wrath shall  
come suddenly,  
and in the time  
of Vengeance he  
will destroy  
thee. Eccli. 5. 8.  
The sad ha-  
rock which  
Mortal Sin  
makes in the  
Soul.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Serm. 2.*



„ distance between Sin and Grace, than betwixt Grace and  
 „ Glory; for betwixt Sin and Grace the distance and separa-  
 „ tion is infinite; but betwixt Grace and Glory in just Men  
 „ Death only intervenes: He therefore that sins Mortally,  
 „ removes himself infinitely far from God, and draws near  
 „ to Hell, between which and the Sinner Life only mediates;  
 „ which is also very often extinguish'd and taken away by  
 „ a sudden and unforeseen Death. How many have we known  
 „ to go well to Bed, and presently after to be carry'd to  
 „ their Graves to be bury'd? O Almighty, and Merciful  
 „ God! as easy and inclin'd to pardon those that repent, as  
 „ he is powerful and severe to punish the obstinate. Thus  
 „ our Holy Father. These and the like Considerations are  
 „ very proper to raise in us an horror and detestation of Mor-  
 „ tal Sin, and powerfully to move a Man that has never so  
 „ little fear of God and concern for his Salvation, to make use,  
 „ for fear of a Surprize, of the most effectual means for speedily  
 „ freeing himself from so damnable a condition, by having Re-  
 „ course without Delay to Superiours, who alone have power  
 „ to do it in Reserv'd Cases.

O my Soul! fly from Sin, more than from Snakes and Ser-  
 pents, since one alone is more venomous than all these put to-  
 gether. O God! deliver me from so great an Evil. O wretch  
 that I am, how blindly have I gone astray in that which most  
 imported me to know! How ungrateful have I been to thy Di-  
 vine Majesty, who created'st me for so high an End, and how  
 evilly have I repaid thee that didst me so much good? O my  
 Creator, that I had never offended thee! Pardon, O Lord,  
 my transgressions, for thine own sake. Help me to get out of  
 them presently without Delay, and receive me again into fa-  
 vour; that I may lead the remainder of my Life in perfect Sanc-  
 tity, conformable to the sublime state of Perfection, whereto  
 thou hast been pleas'd to call me.

*The Just shall  
 reprove me in  
 Mercy, and*

9. III. *And let the Ministers, if they be Priests, enjoyn  
 them Penance with Mercy.* ] After the example of the ~~w~~olds  
 Redeemer,

### §.III.

### *Their Penitents,*

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Redeemer, who always receiv'd Sinners with unspeakable sweetness, charity, and tenderness of Affection; his very Bowels melting, as it were, towards them, and raising their Confidence in him with his ordinary, *Confide fili*. It was after this manner that he spake to the Paralytick: *Son, be of good cheer, fear not, thy Sins are forgiven thee*. And to the Woman found in Adultery: *Go thy ways, and sin no more*. And to that other Woman that was a Sinner in the City these words of Honour: *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*. And lastly, to the Prodigal Son, in the Parable of a Tender Father: *Bring forth the first Stole, and Ring, and kill the fat Calf*. Without upbraiding him with his prodigalities and youthful follies; but instead of that, fell about his neck, kiss'd, hugg'd and imbrac'd him, transported with joy at his penitential Return. Behold after what manner, Superiours, Confessors, and Pastors of Souls are to behave themselves towards penitent Sinners, how they are to dispense the Mysteries of God. If the Master be so merciful and indulgent, can it become the Servant to be harsh and severe? Which serves many times for nothing else but to fret and vex poor Penitents, to diminish the Confidence they ought to have in their Directors, and over-whelming them with melancholy and sadness indanger throwing them into despair. You who are such to your Neighbour in his, what may you expect from God in your own Case? The Wise Man will tell you: *Man to Man reserves anger, and do's he seek remedy of God? He has not Mercy on a Man like to himself, and do's he intreat for his own Sins? Judgment without Mercy to him that has not done Mercy*. And therefore our Holy Founder gives this Advice to all Superiours. "He to whom Obedience is due, says he, and is held for the Greater among you, let him become as the Lesser, and as the Servant of his other Brethren, and exercise Mercy towards

*give me correction. Ps. 140. 5.*  
The admirable sweetness of our Redeemer.

*Math. 9. 2.*  
*Joan. 8. 11.*

*Luc. 7. 48.*

*Luc. 15. 20.*

*Ecclesi. 28. 3.*

*Jac. 2. 13.*

*Opusc. Tom. 1.*  
*Ep. 2. Cap. 9.*

R r his

„ his Subjects in the same manner as he would wish, were he  
 „ himself a Subject. Neither let him be mov'd for the bad  
 „ example and sin of his Brother, but with all humility and  
 „ patience sweetly correct, admonish, and support him. And  
 „ writing to Brother *Elias*, his Vicar-General, he counsels  
 „ him thus: " In all things be patient, and well dispos'd.  
 „ If any Brother offend thee, refer it to God. In this alone  
 „ I shall know whether thou art God's Servant, if with  
 „ Mercy and Sweetness thou bring back thy stray Brother  
 „ to him, and notwithstanding his great offence thou still  
 „ cease not to love him. And if he be afraid for some hu-  
 „ mane respect to ask pardon, do thou ask of him, if he  
 „ desire Mercy. And if by the instigation of the Devil, any  
 „ one shall fall into some very enormous Crime, let him  
 „ have recourse to his Guardian, and let his Guardian send  
 „ him to the Provincial, who shall receive him with com-  
 „ passion and tenderness; and if he find, that he repents from  
 „ his heart and is truly sorry, he shall say to him: *Go thy*  
 „ *ways, and sin no more.* O sweet Indulgence, how com-  
 „ fortable art thou to poor Sinners!

Some other  
 Considerations  
 offer'd  
 to Superiours  
 to incline  
 them to Mer-  
 cy.

*S. Ambrose* in his second Book of Penance, ask'd nothing  
 else of God, but this charitable and tender Compassion for  
 the sins of his Neighbour; and he obtain'd it to so great a  
 degree, that *Paulinus* says of him in his Life, that he even  
 wept with those that Confess'd to him; and discover'd to  
 them the bad state of his own Conscience, to move them  
 to do the like. Penitents are sooner by this means drawn to  
 God, than by indiscreet zeal, full of harshness, rigor and  
 severity. For as nothing moves us more to Love, than to  
 see ourselves belov'd; so the Affection which a Confessor  
 shews his Penitent, by a charitable compassion of his Weak-  
 ness, gains his Heart; and then whatsoever is said to him  
 in this condition makes a deep impression upon him, and  
 whatsoever

whatsoever correction is given him, he receives it with submission, and as coming from a Father. Wherefore *S. Basil* would have all the actions of Priests, to be full of tenderness, and to deal with their spiritual Children after such a manner, that those whom they reprehend may be perswaded, that all they say comes from a pure motion of Charity, and a desire of their obtaining Everlasting Happiness. This is to be able to know how *To pour Wine and Oil into Wounds*, as the *Samaritan* of the Gospel did, and as those do, who thus mix sweetness and compassion with reprehension and penance, which is of itself displeasing; and thereby better cure the wounds of the Soul, than by treating Sinners rudely and harshly. For ordinarily speaking, you will gain very little upon them by this means, but will render them more obdurate and less capable of counsel. Wherefore according to *S. Paul's* advice, *Let us put on the bowels of Mercy, as the Elect and Favourites of God.* Let us show the tenderness of a Nurse that cherishes her Infant in her bosom; bowels full of charity and compassion for Souls that are under the tyranny of the Devil. This is what is very pleasing in God's sight; it is this he requires of our zeal, and this which most of all belongs to *Frier-Minors*; who, though their Habits are rough and harsh, yet their Manners ought to be mild, sweet, tender and compassionate, as becomes Apostolical Men and the Disciples of a Master that says, *Learn of me, because I am Meek and Humble of heart.*

LUC. 10. 34.

Coloss. 3. 12.

Math. 23. 29.

O God of mercy! To sinful Man thou hast imparted power to pardon Sins, to the end he may pardon with more Liberality, by how much he knows his own Necessity. And although it is most just that he should have regard to thy Honour, yet thou art pleas'd also he respect his own Profit. Seventy thousand, yea Millions of times be blest'd this thy infinite Charity; by the which, I humbly beseech thee, that I may never shew myself severe to my fellow-Brethren, to whom thou art so Indulgent.

Rij

If

The unspeakable mildness of our Heavenly Father.

*Be ye Merciful, as also your Father is Merciful. Lnc. 6. 36.*

*Our Lord is pitiful, and merciful: Patient, and very merciful. Our Lord is Sweet to all: And his Mercy is above all his works.*

*Pf. 144. 8. The Earth is full of the Mercy of our Lord. Pf. 32. 5.*

It were here also good for Superiours, to reflect upon the Clemency of our Heavenly Father, to incline them to exercise Mercy towards their Subjects when they offend. I pray tell me, what is there more important for God and Men, than the knowledge of his Divine Nature, than the fear of his Justice, than the much to be ador'd reverence of his Sovereignty? Notwithstanding, as if he prefer'd the glory of his Patience before his own Being, he rather chose patiently to suffer so many faithless, so many wicked ones, so many sinners, and that the lips of Blasphemers might dare to say, *There is no God*; than, that taking revenge in the heat of Crimes, by punishing every Sin, it should be said of him, Verily there is a God, but he is perpetually arm'd with lightning and terrours, ever inaccessible to the prayers of Men, as those Mountains which throw forth their inflamed bowels. Nay, much otherwise; he would be surnam'd the God of Mercy, and the Father of Goodness. Whereupon *S. Gregory* has judiciously said, that his Patience still walks hand in hand with his Charity. Wherefore, as the Love of God towards Men is incomparable, so his Patience, to indure the faults and infirmities of Sinners, admits no comparison. How many Pirats are there daily for whom God opens Seas? How many Idolaters, for whom he causes Stars to shine, Fountains to stream, Plants to sprout, Harvests to wax yellow, and Vines to ripen, as well as for the Faithful? How many ungrateful and rebellious Children are there, who every day receiving so many benefits from him, take them as Hogs do acorns, still grunting towards the ground, and never casting an eye towards Heaven? How many Spirits, enemies of truth and light, disturbers of publick repose, transgressors of laws both Divine and Humane, do daily frame obstacles against the will of this Sovereign Master? And yet he suffers them; as if he had no other business in the world but pa-

## S. IV.

*Their Penitents.*

3:17.

patiently to bear, and to vanquish by benefits; the malice and ingratitude of Men. In fine, how many Ecclesiasticks, Priests, and Religious, whom he has chosen above all others, and sanctify'd for himself, are there, who bely their Profession, who throw disorder and scandal among the People by their evil Example? Yet God tolerates them, God protects them, God continually obliges them. And, if needs he must draw the sword of Justice out of the scabbard, it is with delays, and excessive clemency. Will then Superiours place their Glory in severity and harshness, in impetuous corrections, in rigors and penances insupportable?

O blessed be the Fountain of Gods Goodness, from whence spring so great Patience and Mercy! O that I could imitate it in my conversation with Men! Come, O my Soul, for water to this Fountain, and no longer abuse the longanimity and patience of thy Sovereign. Come with heaviness by reason of thy Sins; but with joy through hope to wash thyself therein. O my Creator, I here prostrate at the feet of thy dread Majesty, do humbly acknowledge the multitude and greatness of the Crimes; which I have committed against thy divine Goodness. I acknowledge them, O my gracious Lord God, with all possible shame and confusion; and I abhor them with all the sense of Sorrow my heart is capable of: Not only by reason of the Benefits which I have receiv'd from thy Bounty, and abus'd by my ingratitude; nor for having thereby forfeited my right and title to Heaven and eternal felicity; nor for having deserv'd Hell and everlasting punishments for them: But principally, and only; because my Crimes are displeasing, opposite, and offensive to thy infinitely amiable Goodness, which meerly for its own sake; ought to be most sincerely, gratefully, affectionately honour'd; lov'd, and obey'd by all Creatures, both in Heaven and Earth.

S. IV. *But if they be not Priests, let them cause it to be injoyn'd by other Priests.*] The reason whereof is: Because there are such Circumstances many times attending the Reserv'd Case, which ought not to be express'd but in Confession, as being Private; and yet the knowledge thereof may be

Go, shew thy  
self to the  
Priest. Math.  
8. 4.

Priests the proper Ministers of Absolution and Penance.

be necessary for injoyning a proportionable Penance. And therefore it is fit, the Case be remitted to a Priest; to whom, as the Absolution from sin, so the imposing of Penance for the same properly belongs.

From this Text, say *S. Bonaventure* and *Hugo of Dina.* it is plain, that the Provincials of our Order have properly the Care of Souls; Since they have power, if they be Priests, themselves to give Absolution from sins: And if they be not Priests, they can delegate or commit this power to other Priests, and therefore ought to be capable of Ecclesiastical or spiritual Jurisdiction. From whence it follows, that Lay-Brothers cannot be Provincials amongst us, because they are incapable of all spiritual Jurisdiction, as being not in Orders, and for that reason not Qualify'd for the care and government of Souls, and consequently neither of the Provincialship according to our Rule.

Whether Lay-Brothers can be Provincials amongst us.

*Treat thy cause with thy Friend, and reveal not a secret to a Stranger.*

*Prov. 25. 9.*

Whether the Brethren may Confess out of the Order.

*Of the Order, as it shall seem according to God most expedient.* ] Either for the good of Religion in general, or of the Brother that has offended in particular. He says: *Of the Order*; not a Stranger, either Religious, or Secular: Because Strangers, being unacquainted with the Spirit of the Order, with our Customs and Constitutions, and the obligations of our Rule, cannot be competent Judges of the enormity or quality of our Transgressions; and consequently cannot justly determine, what penances and satisfactions they may deserve, what counsel to give, what remedies to apply, &c. Then again, sending our Penitents for Absolution to Externs, would reflect upon the Body of the Order; as if we had not Confessors among us sufficiently capable, and endow'd with charity, learning, and discretion for the due administration of the Sacrament of Penance. Moreover, it sets open the gate to irregular and discontented Subjects; who, under colour of seeking spiritual comfort Abroad, would by that means

means make known their grievances, corrections and penances; and in their own favour and defence, would accuse Superiours, though never so reasonable and just, of being partial, severe and tyrannical in their regards; which would encourage disrespect, contumacy and disobedience towards them, and be the occasion of a thousand abuses and disorders in Communities. Wherefore to prevent these and the like inconveniencies, the Apostolical Sea has wisely ordain'd, that no Brother of the Order shall presume to confess his Sins, whether Reserv'd or not Reserv'd to any Extern what ever; excepting only Cases of urgent Necessity, and the time of a *Fubile*. Urgent Necessity is the article of Death, or want of a Confessor in time of need. And this is conform to the intention of our Holy Founder, intimated to us in his First Rule, in express terms, where he says: "Let my beloved, Brethren, as well Clerks as Lay-Brothers, confess their Sins to Priests of our Religion.

*Clem. II.  
Bonif. VIII.  
Leo X.  
Innoc. VIII.  
Clem. VII.*

*1. Reg. c. 20.*

Help me, O God! in the discharge of so just and reasonable a Duty. Who are better able, or more willing to assist me, than mine own Brethren, or in whom I ought to repose a greater Confidence? If it be Shame, O my Soul, that detains thee, remember: *Nothing is hid which shall not be reveal'd, nor secret that shall not to be known.* Were it not better with humility to accuse thyself here of thy Sins, to receive Pardon, than that they should accuse thee in Judgement, to condemn thee? Preserve me, O good Jesus, from that pernicious Shame which trains Sin with it, and shuts the gate against its remedy; and favour my Puffanimity, giving me assurance to manifest my faults, without fear or apprehension; of their Ignominy, or undergoing Penance for them.

*LUC. 12. 2.*

§. V. We come now to examine, what these Cases are; and then who has Authority to absolve from them. As to the first, the Cases Reserv'd at present in the Order, are these following.

1. *Witch-Crafts, Inchantments, Sorceries.*] By which the Creator is abjur'd, the Devil acknowledg'd and serv'd, and our

The Cases Reserv'd in the Order,



and the Grievousness of them.

our Neighbour by the Devil's assistance endamag'd in his Person and Goods; or something Done, or Known through his means by preternatural, vain and unproportionable ways.

2. *Apostasy from the Order, whether without the Habit or with it, when it proceeds so far, that the Person goes out of the inclosure of the Monastery or Convent.*] Wherein a threefold wickedness is committed: First against God, by violating our Vows, which ty. us inseparably all our life-time to the Divinity. Secondly against Ourselves, being accessory to our own Damnation, by leaving the secure Haven of Religion, and imbarcking ourselves again in the wide World. Thirdly against Religion, our chief Benefactrix, and a Mother so tender and solicitous for our Salvation, by contristating and defaming her with a Desertion so reproachfull, so scandalous, so criminal and unjust, that by the law of Armes in Military *Renegado's* it is most deservedly punish'd with Death.

3. *A going in the Night time, and by Stealth out of the Monastery or Convent, although it be without a mind to apostatize.*] As an Argument of some notorious and malicious design in hand, which being not able to indure the Light, nor the eyes of Superiours and their Brethren, seeks for Darkness to cover itself. For what do's a Sheep straggling from the Flock; a young Maid out of her Fathers house at an unseasonable hour; a Burgher out of the Walls of his City when it is besieg'd by the Enemy; or a Sentinel at a distance from his Post, if not with some evil intention?

4. *Propriety against the Vow of Poverty that amounts to a Mortal Sin.*] To wit two Shillings or half a Crown value. To reclaim again our Temporal goods after we have given them to God, and make Idols of them by appropriating them to ourselves, what is it else but to deny the true God, who alone ought to be our Portion?

5. *A voluntary Sin of the Flesh consummated by deed.* By carnal Copulation. By which the vow of Chastity is notoriously violated, and infamy and confusion entail'd upon the Order.

6. *A Killing, or Wounding, or grievous Striking of any one whatsoever.* ] If it be a Sin in an ordinary Christian to be Angry, or to call his brother Fool: How much greater is it in a Religious Man, who is in a more particular manner a Professor of the Gospel, the Disciple of a Meek Saviour, and in his Habit esteem'd as a Lamb of God, and an Angel of Peace? What a Crime then for him to strike, wound, or kill?

7. *A malicious Hindering, or Retarding, or Opening of letters from Superiours to Inferiours, or from Inferiours to Superiours.* ] By which a necessary communication and intelligence between the Head and the Members is interrupted. From whence insue Confusion in the government of the Order, Discovery of secrets, Hatreds, Quarrels, Suspicions, Rash judgments, &c in Communities!

8. *A false Oath in a Regular, and Lawful Tribunal.* ] It being an affront and injury done to the First Truth; and by it Justice is stiff'd; and many times the Innocent condemn'd, and the guilty Person acquitted.

9. *A Procuring, or Helping, or Counselling any one to miscarry after the Fruit is quicken'd, though the Effect should not insue.* ] A most horrible Crime to go about to murder a poor harmless Innocent, and damn the Soul of it Everlastingly.

10. *A Counterfeiting the Hand, or Seal of the Officers of the Monastery or Convent.* ] By which the Oeconomy of Religion is confounded and disturb'd, and thereby the way set open to a thousand mischiefs and inconveniencies.

11. *Theft of the things of the Monastery or Convent, in such a Quantity as is a Mortal Sin.* ] To wit the value of

two Shillings, or Half-a-Crown, as we said; which is the ordinary Day-wages of a good Workman, and to defraud him of it, in the judgment of Men is esteem'd a weighty-Matter, and a considerable Injustice. This, besides that it has the sin of Propriety joyn'd with it, breeds great scandal and disorder in a Community; and amongst other mischiefs, it causes that private Religious, contrary to the rules of a Community-Life, are forc'd to keep all under lock and key.

12. *Pollutions voluntarily procur'd.* } The mischief and abomination whereof is sufficiently known; which, to the end it may not spread itself, and occasion publick scandal and confound Religion, it is convenient, Superiours and other choice Confessors should be made acquainted therewith the better to prevent the same.

13. *Stubborn Disobedience, or when any one after three admonitions given, with sufficient intervalls between, remains disobedient for a natural Day.* } This occasions so great a disorder in religious Communities, as being against the principal Vow of a religious State, that not only publick Penances are ordain'd to punish it; but moreover it was judg'd necessary to appoint also in Confession select Judges and discreet zealous Confessors for the more effectual cure thereof, for the greater humiliation of the Penitent, further satisfaction for the crime, and clearer information of its enormity. Which are the Ends chiefly design'd in all Reserv'd Cases; and therefore it is fitting none but able Men should be impowr'd to absolve from them.

O Gracious Lord God I be mercifully pleas'd to open the eyes of my Soul, throughly to penetrate the Malignity of these enormous Sins; to the end that the horror of seeing what they are, and the deserved punishment inflicted on them by Holy Religion, may keep me from falling into them. Oh I let my Enemy never say, *I have prevail'd against him*; but if at any time he should attempt to lay Snares to intrap my unwary Soul, be thou my powerful

powerful Protector, in whom I put all my trust and confidence. And therefore Incline unto my aid, O God ! O Lord, make haste to help me.

Here may the judicious Reader take notice, that since Pope *Clem. VIII.* Decree 1593. the Superiours of religious Orders have not power to reserve any other than the foresaid Cases. But if at any time the good of Religion should require to have some particular Case, besides these, reserv'd, that it be done, upon mature consideration, in their General or Provincial Chapters respectively; so to prevent the inconveniencies that ordinarily arise from too frequent reservation of Cases.

Note.

For what else relates to this Subject, take these two following Rules, which will be of good use and serve you for a further direction in this matter. 1. That all Reserv'd Cases, being Penal and Odious, as instituted for a bridle and chastisement of enormous Crimes, are to be strictly interpreted, and oblige no farther than the bare Words import, beyond which they ought not to be extended, according to the common receiv'd *Axiom*: *Favours may be amplify'd, but Punishments are to be restrain'd*. 2. That no one incurs any of the above said Cases, though he should commit the Act prohibited by them, if the *Matter*, *Knowledge*, *Deliberation*, and *Malice* suffice not for a Mortal Sin.

S. VI. Now as for such as have power to absolve from the foresaid Reserv'd Cases, to whom the Brethren ought to have recourse in time of need, according to our General *Constitutions* c. 6. p. 12. They are these: All actual Superiours, from the General of the Order to the Vicar of the Convent in the Guardian's absence: And besides, all such as these shall delegate their Authority to within their respective Districts: Or, such as shall be appointed according to the said Decree of *Clem. VIII.* two, three, or more of each

who has power at present to absolve from Reserv'd Cases in the Order.

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Convent

Convent in proportion to the number of Brethren. All which is to be understood in *foro anima*, and of Private reserv'd Cases. For as to those that are Publick, say the same *Constitutions*, every Province may dispose, as they shall see most Expedient; which if they do not, then all the above nam'd Persons as to the Guilt, may absolve from them, as well as from those that are Private.

*Kindie not the  
Coles of Sin-  
ners rebuking  
them, and be  
not Kind'd  
with the flame  
of the fire of  
their Sins.  
Eccli. 8. 13.  
de repar. Gent.  
Lib. 2. Cap. 3.  
17. 102. 13.*

S. VII. *And they must take heed, that they be not angry, nor troubl'd for the Sin of any one, because Anger and Trouble hinder Charity in themselves and others.* ] But shew themselves in all such cases as true Fathers. Fathers, says *S. Ambrose*, behold the falls of their Children, rather with Compassion than Anger. God likewise do's the same: He loves us as his Children, he knows our frailty, and therefore our falls and weaknesses excite him rather to a tender compassion, than to any indignation towards us. *As a Father pities his Children, so our Lord has pity and compassion upon those that fear him; for he knows of what matter we are made, and he has not forgot that we are Dust.* Shun therefore all trouble, bitterness, vexation and anger upon the account of your Subjects failings.

*Jac. 1. 20.*

*Anangry Superiour the  
cause of many  
disorders in a Commu-  
nity.*

And particularly as to Anger, remember what *S. James* says: *That the Anger of Man works not the Justice of God.* Where in few words he declares the mischievous Effects of this furious Passion, carefully to be avoided by all the world, especially by Religious Men, as most pernicious to their Spiritual Functions, requiring a great calm and serenity of Mind, which this tumultuous and stormy Passion intirely robs them of. And particularly as to what regards a Superiour; whose disorders affect his Subjects, as the Head do's the Members of the Body; it causes a strange havock in his Soul, when it once takes possession thereof, rendring him wholly incapable of exercising his Charge. It puts a blind

blind upon his understanding, troubles and discomposes his judgment, deprives him of all good advice, shuts up his ears to the reasons, excuses, and humble supplications of his Subjects. It lets his tongue loose to arrogant and opprobrious language, pushes him on to unmerciful and unjust penances. And produces besides an infinity of mischiefs in his Community; as Murmurs, Detractions, Diffidence of his Subjects towards him, Troubles, Discontents, Distractions at their prayers, Disrespect, Disobedience, Hatreds, Aversions, Despair, and sometimes Apostasy. Of all which an angry Superiour must render an account at the last Day, as the occasion thereof by his passion and too great severity.

*Anger has no Mercy. Prov. 27. 4.*

S. *Denys* treating upon this subject, says, we must deal with Sinners as we do with those that are Blind; we treat not ill one that is Blind for going where he should not; because he knows not whether he go's, and we are never Angry with him; but on the contrary we have a great Compassion of him, and even lead him by the hand into his way. Sinners are truly Blind according to the words of *Sophonias*, *They shall walk like Blind Men, because they have sinn'd against our Lord.* Wherefore we ought not presently to be Angry with them, or to desire their punishment or destruction; but to have a great compassion of them, and conduct them with charity and tenderness into the right way, according to the example of the good Pastor, who went to seek after his stray'd Sheep, call'd it to him, and when he found it, took it upon his Shoulders, and carry'd it back after this manner to the Fold. Behold a good zeal and according to God: But the zeal that moves Superiours to Anger against their Subjects, is not a Religious zeal, nor do's it please God; because it is not conformable to his infinite Goodness. The Souls of Saints, says S. *John Chrysostom*, are wonderful mild, gentle, and loving towards all men, not only

*Sophon. 1. 17.*

*Hom. 29. in c. 15. ad Rom.*

Do-

*De catechiz.  
rudib. c. 15.*

*Gal. 6. 1.*

*Ephes. 4. 31.*

*Eccij. 28. 13.*

*A soft answer  
breaks anger;  
and a hard  
word raises up  
fury. Prov. 15.  
1.*

*Give not hea-  
viness to thy  
Soul, and afflict  
not thyself in  
thy counsel.  
Eccij. 30. 22.*

Domesticks, but Strangers : Because they are inflam'd with Charity ; which , as *S. Austin* says, is in travail with some, and with others infirm ; others it is careful to edify , others it is afraid to offend ; with some it bows itself down , with others it raises itself up ; to some it is sweet , to others sharp, an Enemy to none , a Mother to all. Wherefore let it please our Prelates in correcting the faults of their Brethren, to follow the Advice which *S. Paul* gives to his *Galatians* : *If a Man be found in any fault, you that are Spiritual, instruct such an one in the spirit of lenity, considering thine own self, lest thou also be tempted.* And to the *Ephesians* : *Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation be taken from you.* Which then most especially is to be observ'd , when you perceive your Brother to be inflam'd ; lest Anger meeting with Anger, you throw him headlong into inextricable difficulties. For as the Wise Man says : *Hasty contention kindles a fire, and hasty strife sheds blood. If you blow upon a Spark, it will burn as fire, and if you spit thereon, it shall be quenched.* A little Yielding of a Superiour in such Case, is able to stifle and prevent an infinity of Mischiefs. It gives time to him that has offended, to enter into himself, and to correct his over-sight without your trouble. There are some People in the world of a nature which easily takes disgust, and are gall'd with their own Harness. It is a great Vertue, to soften them with a peaceful, still, and charitable Sweetness, as if we cast Oil into the raging Sea. He that can tolerate an Injury, said an Ancient, is worthy of an Empire. His very Silence will disarm the Passionate man, and lay him prostrate at his Feet, who seem'd to thunder over his Head.

*S. VIII.* Neither let them be disquieted and troubl'd for their Brethrens sins, however enormous and scandalous they may be. For Anxiety and Trouble hinder us from doing our Duty, but contribute nothing towards mending our Subjects Faults.

Faults. If these fail in their Duty, let us do ours, in chastising them. Let us render Justice to the Order, and correct our Brethren when there is occasion, according to the rules of moderation, sweetness, and fraternal Charity; without permitting ourselves to be seisd and carry'd away with vexation and impatience, Enemies to all good counsel and sage conduct. A judicious and skilful Surgeon, to prevent a *Gangrene*, cuts and flashes his Patient without concern: Do you the like, when the good of Religion and Justice require it in your Subjects behalf, without fretting and discomposing yourself. We should esteem that Judge a Madman, who, before passing Sentence against a Criminal, should within himself execute it upon his own Person. The Saints in Heaven, are noticher troubl'd at the Impieties of the earth, nor the Blasphemies of hell: So no more should we at the sins of our Brethren, had we their conformity and submission to the will of God. There is an All-wise, and powerful Ruler of the world; that knows why he permits them, and can draw good out of evil, and remedy them when he pleases, without our Trouble. It was he that created this Universe, let us give him leave to govern it after his own manner; which he cannot do, but by Wisdom, Justice, and Bounty; by a Wisdom that knows all, a Justice that rectifies all, and a Bounty that loves all. Scandals have ever been, and always will be to the end of the world. Even the sacred College of Apostles was not exempt; whereof one denied his Master, another betray'd him, a third would not believe him, and all forsook him. And although there be a Wo to those that commit Scandals, there is none for such as are not troubl'd at them. Let therefore Superiours in correcting offences remain immoveable, calm and serene, and exercise their judiciary Functions with all tranquillity of mind, being no more concern'd or disquieted in doing them, than the

Trouble of mind to be avoided by all wise and prudent Superiours.



the Divinity is, when it throws Thunder and Lightning into the four Quarters of the world to chastise the Sins of Men.

O meek and gentle Lamb of God ! who in the whole course of thy life, never shew'dst any the least Anger, Trouble, or Impatience, but remain'dst always calm and peaceful : Impart to us, we humbly beseech thee, one little spark of this thy divine Spirit ; to the end that in our Corrections we may suppress all Passion, Vexation and Trouble, and by the same means preserve Charity both in ourselves and others. O my Soul ! that we could perpetually have before our Eyes this mirror of Mildness, we need not seek for any other Remedy against our irregular Motions. His Aspect would cure all our Anger, as the brazen Serpent heal'd all the Plagues of *Israel*.





Of the Election of the General Minister  
of this Fraternity, and of the Chapter  
of Pentecost.

C H A P. VIII.

*All the Brethren are oblig'd to have always one of the Brethren of this Religion for their Minister General, and Servant of the whole Fraternity; and are firmly bound to obey him. Who Departing, let the Election of a Successor be made by the Provincial Ministers and Custodes in the Chapter of Pentecost. In the which, the Provincial Ministers are bound always to meet together, wheresoever it shall be appointed by the General Minister. And this once every three Tears, or otherwise more or less, as it shall be ordain'd by the foresaid Minister. And if at any time it should appear to the generality of the Provincials and Custodes, that the foresaid Minister suffice not for the Service and common Profit of the Brethren, the Brethren aforesaid, to whom this Election is given, are bound in the name of our Lord to choose for themselves another Custos. And after the Chapter of Pentecost, every Minister and Custos, if they please, and shall think it expedient, may once the same Tear in their Custodies call their Brethren to Chapter.*

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## THE EXPOSITION.

*There shall be one Fold, and one Shepherd.*  
*Joan. 10. 16.*  
 A Monarchical Government the most perfect, such as is that of our Order.

**S. I.** *All the Brethren are oblig'd to have always One.* }  
**A** And no more : A Monarchical form of government being of all others the most excellent and perfect. So in the Universe there is one sovereign Ruler; among the Angels in heaven one Principal; in the Church of God upon earth one Vicar or chief Head; one King in a kingdom, one General in an army, one Pilate in a ship, and one Father or Master in a family. It is by means of this One, that Peace is better preserv'd throughout the whole Body of the Order, compos'd of so many different nations, persons, interests, humours, pretensions, inclinations. By it, Differences are easier compos'd, Schisms prevented, and a perfect Agreement and Uniformity every where establish'd among us in religious Discipline, in our Habits, Manners, Ceremonies, Constitutions, and Divine Worship; All animated, directed, and govern'd by one same Spirit and Head.

Now there may be many

And this kind of Oeconomy our Holy Founder will have observ'd for ever in his whole Family, unless the Apostolical Sea

Sea by reason of any Reformation which may for the future be introduc'd into the Order, judge otherwise expedient. For then the Brethren of each Branch or Reformation, are by virtue of this Precept bound to obey their respective Generals. As the *Observantines*, *Capucines*, and *Conventuals*, do at this present; each one having their own particular General, absolute and independent, to whom all the members of each Reformation are subject. After the same manner, as the *Benedictines* have seven famous Congregations, all professing the same Rule of *S. Benet*, with seven Generals or chief Superiours independent of one another. And the *Augustines* above twenty, each Flock having its proper Pastor, without prejudice to Religion, or the publick Peace of either Order; the Popes so tempering by their dispensing power the Rules of these great Founders, or adding new Constitutions, and adapting them to the several inclinations, abilities, and complexions of their Professors. In such manner, that they make a curious Harmony in the Church, and all serve God with peace and security of Conscience, to the great advantage and increase of religious Perfection.

Generals of the Order without prejudice to this Text.

§. II. *Of the Brethren.* ] Profess'd, not Novices. *Of this Religion.* ] Not of any other Order or Body of Men, either Cardinal, Bishop, or what ever else is, not of our *Minoritical* Fold; lest there be a disagreement and misunderstanding between the Head and the Body; and that a Stranger, unacquainted with our Constitutions, Customs, and the Obligations of the Rule, should too easily condescend to the suggestions and importunities of the looser Brethren; and by that means come to introduce Relaxations and Abuses among us, to the prejudice of our strict Poverty and other essential Points of the Rule, impair religious Discipline, and obfuscate the splendor of the whole Order; and a hundred such like inconveniencies and Spiritual dammages would insue

*Him shalt thou set, whom our Lord thy God shall choose of the number of thy Brethren. A Man of another Nation that is not thy Brother, thou can'st not make King. Deut. 17. 15.* The Reasons why the General ought to be of the

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thereupon,

body of the Order, and not a Stranger.

thereupon, for want of Knowledge, Experience, Example, Zeal, Equality, and other proportions requir'd betwixt the Head and the Members of the same Body.

O sweet Jesus, Father of all blessed Harmonies ! who hast grounded all the greatest Mysteries of Religion upon Union, to unite us to thee, to unite us to thy Father, to unite us to Ourselves : Vouchsafe we humbly beseech thee, to unite all *Frier-Minors* together under one Head, ever maintaining in this thy *Minoritical* Flock one same Pastor, taken from among our own Brethren to govern us ; as the fittest means to deliver us from Schisms, and preserve in us the union of fraternal Charity, and that of thy divine Love, wherein consists the whole Sum of our religious Perfection.

Why is the General call'd Minister and Servant of the Fraternity.

§. III. *For their General Minister, and Servant of the whole Fraternity.* ] The General of the Order he calls Minister and Servant, in the Scripture phrase, according to that of *S. Matthew 20. 26. Whosoever shall be the Greatest among you, let him be your Minister; and he that will be First among you, shall be your Servant.* Giving him thereby to understand, that to be a good General he must have the conditions of a good Servant. That is, he must be Humble, Watchful, Laborious, and Faithful. First, he must be Humble, esteeming nothing too mean and beneath him that belongs to the Publick, must put his hands under the feet of the very least of his Subjects to serve and do them good, making himself all to be serviceable to all. According to that of the Apostle: *Whereas I was free of all, I made myself the Servant of all, that I might gain the more. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. To all Men I became all things, that I might save all.* He must be Vigilant and Laborious, he must be the first and last at work ( at all the exercises and duties of Religion ) and whilst his Master ( his Subjects ) sleeps, take care of his affairs. And he must be Faithful and trusty to his charge, taking

1. Cor. 9. 19.

taking to heart the welfare of his Subjects, and espousing the interest of the Order before all private concerns whatsoever. In a word, he must be a Minister and Servant, in bearing the burdens of his Brethren, in instructing the ignorant, in resolving the doubtful, in comforting the afflicted, in bearing with the choleric, in strengthening the wavering, in bringing back the stray'd, in being a Physician to the sick, a Surgeon to the maim'd, an Eye to the blind, an Ear to the deaf, a Tongue to the dumb, a Staff to the lame, to the young a Guide, and to the old a Nurse.

O my Soul! if thou art in Office, become not proud thereupon, but humble thyself, and remember that Honours are heavy Burdens, yea much heavier than those of Slaves. And esteem not thyself a Superiour, although thou shouldst be set over thy Brethren, if thou art not a Minister and Servant to them; in imitation of him, *who came into the world, not to be serv'd, but to serve.* O sweet Master! grant, we humbly beseech thee, that all the Prelates of our Order be truly such, like to thyself.

*Math. 20. 28.*

S. IV. *And are firmly bound to obey him.*] Under the same obligation as they are *Chap. I.* and *Chap. X.* it being here and there one and the same Precept. Obey him, I say: Voluntarily without coercion, Simply without reasoning, Speedily without delay, Manly without fear, Humbly without arrogance, and Perseverantly without ending but with the end of your Life. Our Holy Founder, desirous to express what kind of Obedience it is that he here requires of us to our Superiours, proposes the example of a Dead Body. "Take, says he, a Corps, and set it where ever you please: You will see, it will not oppose your stirring it, it will not murmur at, your placing it, it will not gainsay your leaving it: If you set it in a Chair, it looks downward, not upward: If you clothe it in a garment of Purple, it will appear still more Pale. Behold a true Obedient Child; who, why he is mov'd, questions not; where he is plac'd, cares not; and to be remov'd elsewhere,

*Thou shalt be over my House, and at the commandment of thy Mouth all the People shall obey.*  
*Gen. 41. 40.*  
*The Conditions of a Friar's Obedience.*  
*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Exempl. 1.*

*Chron. p. 3.  
L. 3. c. 42.*

, elsewhere, solicites not : If he be lifted on high and advanc'd , to an Office , he preserves his accustomed Humility , and , the more he is honour'd , the more he esteems himself unworthy. Of such an Obedient Man *Franciscus Papiensis* was wont to say , that he made more account of him , than of one that rais'd the Dead , and that he would sooner offer a candle to his Shrine , than to that of a *Thaumaturgus* or worker of Miracles.

The Example of our Saviour very powerful to move us to the practice of it.

*Luc. 2. 51.*

To come to this effect , we must often represent to ourselves our prime Model , which is the Wildom of God Incarnate , *Jesus-Christ* , the Saviour and Doctor of Mankind , of whom the divine Scripture relates : *That he went down with them* ( his Parents ) *and came to Nazareth , and was subject to them.* He , whose will the Angels of heaven execute with the swiftness of Lightning , and whose commands universal Nature most readily obeys , is made subject to *Mary* and *Joseph* , rul'd and directed by them. And shall a poor and contemptible Subject refuse to obey his Superiour , who is God's Vice-gerent here on earth ? O the insupportable Arrogance and Pride of man , if not humbl'd , abas'd , and confounded with this Subjection , Humiliation , and Obedience of God ! Wherefore , my dear Brethren , we that aspire after religious Perfection , let us bend all our endeavours towards acquiring this precious Treasure. Let this , *And are firmly bound to Obey him* , never be forgotten by us , but may it ever accompany us in all we say , all we do , all we think , firmly perswading ourselves , that nothing done in Religion without it , can be acceptable to God.

*Better is Obedience than Sacrifice : And to Hearken , rather than to Offer the fat of Rams. 1. Reg. 15. 22.*

The Excellency of this Vertue recommends the same to us.

It is this Vertue of *Obedience* , which essentially constitutes Religion , and properly makes a Religious man. It is this , that comprises not only Poverty and Chastity , but all other Vertues also. For admit you be truly Obedient , you cannot fail of being Poor , Chast , Humble , Modest , Patient .

Mor-

Mortify'd, and in a word Master of all Vertues. The reason hereof is, that Vertuous Habits are got by a frequent exercise of their particular Acts, and this is the way that God is pleas'd to bestow them ordinarily upon us. Now Obedience puts us upon this frequent exercise; for all that our Rule prescribes, or our Superiour commands, is always reduc'd to some vertue. Take Obedience along with you for your Guide, and imbrace all the occasions which it shall present you, and you need do no more. Sometimes you will meet with an occasion to exercise your Patience, sometimes Humility, sometimes Poverty, sometimes Mortification, at other times, Chastity, Temperance. And thus as you improve in Obedience, so will you advance in all other Vertues, and as this vertue of Obedience shall flourish in your heart, so all other Vertues will also equally flourish with it. Which made the ancient *Anchorites* of the Desert, to look upon an Hermits submissive Obedience to his Ghostly Father, as an infallible Surety that he would one day become a very Perfect religious man. Of the same opinion are likewise all the Holy Fathers, for this reason calling Obedience the Mother, and Origine of Vertues. *S. Austin* calls it the greatest of Vertues, and likewise the Mother and Source of all Vertues. This is the only Vertue, says *S. Gregory*, that plants other Vertues in our mind, and preserves them after they are once planted. The same *S. Gregory*, as also *S. Bernard*, in their explication of these words of the *Proverbs* 21. *The Obedient Man shall speak victory*, say, that an Obedient Man shall get not only one, but even many Victories, and with them make himself Master of all Vertues. Which made *S. Hierom* to cry out and say: O great and abundant Happiness! O extraordinary Grace! For Obedience is an *Epitome* of all Vertues, because it leads directly to *Jesus-Christ*, and if we follow the way which it points out, we shall soon be Perfect Men. Our



And also the  
Example of  
our Holy  
Founder.

*Orusc. Tom. 3.  
Colloq. 22.*

Our Holy Founder made so great a reckoning of this incomparable Vertue, that he purposely despoil'd himself of his Generalship, to enjoy the sweet fruits and benedictions thereof; addressing himself after he had done it, in these terms to his Successor full of Love and Respect: " Father, and Brother most beloved, from henceforward I acknowledge you for my true Father and Lord. I commend my Soul to your care, and promise to yield you all Reverence, and Obedience, as my Master and lawful Superiour. And I do instantly beg and beseech you for God's sake, that you will appoint one of my Companions to take charge of me, whom I may in all things obey in your stead; for I desire to have you, as my Prelate, every where present with me, for the greater profit and merit of Obedience. Which he no sooner obtain'd, but intirely subjected himself, both at home and abroad, in Churches and Streets, to the conduct of a simple Brother, his Companion; without whose leave he would not do any the least thing, so the more to liken himself to him, *who for us was made Obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*

*Philip. 2. 8.*

O divine Master! How great a friend art thou to holy Obedience, since thou would'st give us such singular and rare Examples thereof. I firmly purpose by thy assistance to obey my Superiours in every thing they shall think fit to command me, how soever difficult it shall seem, fulfilling their wills with an Obedience punctual, prompt, and perseverant until death; never weary'd in obeying them, after thy Example, who wast never tir'd in accomplishing the will of thy Father in heaven, nor of thy Parents here on earth.

*Since thy Brother Judas dy'd, there is not a Man like to him, to go forth against our Enemies.*

[ S. V. *Who departing.* ] This life: Or the Generalship expiring at the time prefix'd by the Statutes; or else by Resignation, Promotion, Deposition, or otherways coming to be Vacant. *Let the Election of a Successor be made by the Provincial Ministers and (ustodes.)* As Persons the most eminent

eminent among the Brethren, most zealous for the publick Good, most prudent and circumspect in their choice, and the best vers'd in the Qualifications of a good Superiour. *In the Chapter of Pentecost.* ] In imitation and memory of that Congregation, wherein the Apostles receiv'd the Holy Ghost. *Act. 2.* This being the Time of all the year the most proper for imploring the divine direction and assistance upon so weighty a concern, as is the election of a Prelate and Pastor for so numerous a Flock as is that of *Frier-Minors*, which is dispers'd over all the world. And likewise for the dispatching of all other Affairs, relating to Regular Discipline and the welfare of the Order; which are no where so effectually perform'd as in Chapters, where the principal Members of the Body are assembl'd together in the spirit of Religion. *For where there be two or three gather'd in my Name, there am I in the midst of them. And, I wisdom dwell in Counsel, and am present in learned cogitations.* And again, *Purposes are disappointed where there is no Counsel; but where many Counsellors are, they are confirm'd.* Infine, *Son, do nothing without Counsel, and after the fact thou shalt not repent.*

*Now therefore  
thou have we  
chosen this day  
to be for him  
our Prince, and  
Captain to wa-  
ge our Battels.  
1. Mach. 9. 29.*

*Math. 18. 20.*

*Prov. 8. 12.*

*Prov. 15. 22.*

*Eccle. 22. 24.*

By Provincial Ministers are here understood such Persons, as being lawfully chosen, govern the Provinces of the Order. Of whose Election since the Rule makes no mention, we must stand to our General *Constitutions*, to *Pope Clem. V. Declaration*, and to the *Canons* of the Church. As for Custodes, they anciently were such as had a certain number of Convents to govern under the Provincial, which in those days were reduc'd into Custodies, by reason of the largeness of the Provinces, so to rule them with more facility and advantage. But these Custodies now being almost out of use among us, and the Provinces reduc'd to a lesser extent, the Popes have ordain'd; that in our Provincial Chapters there

*What our  
Rule under-  
stands by  
Provincial-  
Ministers.  
What by Custodes.*

be made choice of One by the common suffrages of all the Vocals; who still retains the Name, but not the Authority and Jurisdiction of the former Custodes, as having no Subjects, and his chief Office now being only to go with the Provincial to the General Chapter, and there together with him to give his Voice for the election of a General, so to preserve the Letter of this Text.

§. VI. Nevertheless, this Election of a General for the Order may be made independent of the Provincials, Custodes and other Vocals, by the Popes Holiness or the Apostolical See; our Rule in all things being at their disposal, particularly in matters relating to Chapters and Elections, which often vary according to the circumstances of Time, Place, Persons, and Affairs; and this either in, or out of the time of the Chapter of *Whitsontide*, as his Holiness shall think fit. And it is by virtue of this power that the Generalship, which before was for Life according to this Text of the Rule, is now made Sexennial, and other Offices of the Order are reduc'd to the term, either of six, or three years; which is very wisely and piously contriv'd for these following reasons.

The Reasons why the Offices of our Order are of so short continuance.

1. To suppress Arrogance, Pride, Ambition, Tyranny, and other disorders occasion'd by the perpetuity of Offices.
2. That poor Subjects, who do not always meet with favourable Superiours, may after some time be eas'd of their grievances, and have others set over them more propitious and benign.
3. That Superiours knowing the bounds of their Government to be fix'd, may stand the more upon their guards, and exercise their Charges with greater precaution and exactness; and being within a short time to be set again upon the same Level with their Subjects, may rule them with more moderation, humility, sweetness, and Clemency.
4. That the Offices of the Order, by how much the more equally

qually they are shar'd, and pass through more hands, the greater Contentment they give; whilst every Brother according to his Quality, Condition, and Age, takes his turn without exception of Persons. And therefore it was necessary, that those who are now in Office, should after a certain time be discharg'd, to make room for others that are to come after.

§. That Superiours might have opportunity of practising those two eminent Vertues as well as others, to wit, Humility and Obedience, which they chiefly come to Religion for; whereof they would be depriv'd, if they were always to remain in office, to their spiritual damage and loss of so many glorious and meritorious Actions. 6. That after the fatigues and incumberances of *Martha*, we may come to taste again the sweets of *Mary*, sit at our Lords feet in Prayer and Meditation, sing the praises of God in the Quire with our Brethren, and have better opportunity to prepare ourselves for Eternity.

§. VII. *In the which.* ] Chapter of *Pentecost* or General Chapter. *The Provincial Ministers.* ] And also the Custodes, if there be a General Minister to be chosen, otherwise not; which therefore seems to be the reason, why the Rule makes here no mention of Custodes, as it did in the precedent Text, and do's again in the subsequent, where it speaks of the Election of a General. *Are bound always to meet together.* ] Whenever the Affairs of the Order shall so require. *Wheresoever is shall be appointed by the General Minister.* ] As the Head of the Order, and President of the said Chapter. Though now as to the Place, where this Assembly is to be held, it is ordain'd for the greater union, peace and tranquillity of the Order, that each Family of this and the other side the *Alpes*, into which the whole Body of the Order is divided, shall have their Turns alternatively every Six years, which is the Term fix'd at present for keeping

the said Chapter. But as to the Province and Convent where it is to be held in each Family, that is still left to the General's choice; so it be some convenient Place, where the Vocals of all Nations may freely meet, and have full Liberty to speak and act according to each one's Conscience, without fear of being controll'd or overaw'd by any higher Power.

The benefit  
which the  
Order recei-  
ves by Gene-  
ral Chapters.

*And this once every Three years.*] Now every Six years; to avoid trouble, expences, disturbance and commotion in the Order. *Or otherwise more or less, as it shall be ordain'd by the foresaid Minister.*] According to the exigency of Affairs. There to consult together for the better direction and government of the whole Body: To enact Laws, to interpret, change, or abrogate, them: To compose differences: To chuse General Officers: To reform Abuses, to promote Regular Observance, and whatever else concerns the Publick good, unanimously and with joyn'd forces to dispose and order. For what is thus decreed by the common consent of so many Persons, eminent for Vertue, Learning and Authority, assembl'd together in the Name of God, has a wonderful influence upon minds dispos'd to do well, and carry's with it a certain majesty and awe, which, without offering violence, sweetly obliges every one to a ready and exact compliance of their Duty.

O Sacred Apostles! upon whom the Holy Ghost descended this Day in the form of fiery Tongues; purifying, illustrating, and inflaming your Hearts with the fire of his divine Love, and imparting to you all necessary Gifts for the direction and government of his Church. We humbly beseech you to obtain the like favours for our Ministers, Custodes and other Vocals of our *Seraphical* Order, assembl'd together in his holy Name; that this Divine Spirit will please to infuse into their Souls the love of Poverty, Humility, Peace, Concord, Knowledge, Discretion, Zeal and other Vertues fit to maintain the primitive vigor of our Order; and by the same means, to renew here on Earth the daily memory of your Apostolical Lives.

§. VIII.

S. VIII. *And if at any time it should appear.* ] By some manifest and convincing Proof. *To the generality of the Ministers and Custodes.* ] To the Major part. *That the foresaid Minister suffice not for the Service and common Profit of the Brethren.* ] By reason of Old Age, Infirmary, Scandalous Life, Neglect of his charge, Impiety, Schism, Herefy, &c. *The Brethren aforesaid, to whom this Election is given.* ] The Provincials and Custodes. *Are bound in the Name of our Lord.* ] Under strict obligation; wherein if they fail, they will render themselves accountable before the same Lord at the Day of Judgment, for the damage which the whole Order shall sustain thereby. *To chuse for themselves.* ] And for their Brethren. *Another Custos.* ] Another General, Pastor, Governour, Protector and Corrector of this Fraternity. Proceeding therein after the manner prescrib'd by the *Canons* of the Church, and the *Constitutions* of the Order; making choice of a Person, whom they according to God and their Conscience shall judge most accomplish'd in all respects for so weighty a Charge; the most vertuous, discreet, learned, grave, exemplar, and-experienc'd of the whole Body.

Our Lord has cut off the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and has transferr'd it over to thy Neighbour, who is a better Man than thou. 1. Reg. 15. 28.

Here the name of *Custos*, which is a *Latine* word signifying a Keeper or Watch-man, is given to the General. A name, which likewise may be attributed to all other Prelates of the Order; for as-much as it is the part and office of every Superiour to keep, preserve, and watch over his Flock. In the same manner the name of *Guardian*, deriv'd from *Ward* or *Guard*, is given to our Local Superiour, to let him understand, that he is to keep Watch and Ward with all care and diligence over those that are committed to his charge.

why the General is call'd *Custos*.

And the Local Superiour *Guardian*.

Now if my Reader pleases, for his better direction in the choice of a good General, I will here present him with a commendious draught of the principal Conditions of a worthy

The Conditions of a good General.

Prelate,

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Collat. 26.*

Prelate, taken out of one of our Holy Founders *Opusculum* in the following manner. " My Children, I know not  
 „ where to find an absolutely compleat General for so great  
 „ an Army compos'd of so different parts, or a Pastor in all  
 „ respects qualify'd for so numerous and vastly extended a  
 „ Flock, as ours is; but I will paint one out to you, in  
 „ whom you may behold as in a Glass, what the General  
 „ and Pastor of such a Family at least ought to be. In the  
 „ first place, he must be a Person very serious and grave,  
 „ of singular Discretion, of an unspotted Reputation,  
 „ free from Partiality and all private Affections, lest by  
 „ favouring Particulars he give occasion of scandal and of-  
 „ fence to the Body. He must be a Man much addicted to  
 „ Prayer; dedicating one part of his Time to the service of  
 „ his own Soul, and the other to the care of his Flock. And  
 „ therefore early in the morning let him begin the Day with  
 „ the holy Sacrifice of the *Mass*, and there with a long  
 „ continued devotion most affectionately recommend both  
 „ himself and his Flock to the Divine Protection. After  
 „ Prayer, let him give Audience to such as present them-  
 „ selves; answering, satisfying, and providing for every one  
 „ with Charity, Patience, Courtesy and Meekness. He must  
 „ not be an Exceptor of Persons, so as to take less care of  
 „ the ignorant and simple, than of the wise and learned. If  
 „ he has the gift of Knowledge and Sciences, let it appear  
 „ chiefly in his Manners, in the exercises of Piety, Simpli-  
 „ city, Patience and Humility; cherishing in himself and  
 „ others all sorts of Virtues, continually reducing them to  
 „ Practice, and exciting others more by Examples than by  
 „ Words. He ought to have a perfect detestation and hor-  
 „ ror of *Money* above all things, it being the bane and cor-  
 „ ruption of our State and Profession; and as the Head,  
 „ Leader, and Model of the whole Order, let him never abuse  
 it

„ it by having undue recourse thereto : But for his own  
 „ particular let him be content with a Habit and a Breviary;  
 „ and for his office an Ink-horn and a Seal is sufficient.  
 „ Let him not be a horder up of Books, nor much intent  
 „ upon Reading; lest he takes from his Office, what he be-  
 „ stows upon his Study. Let him mercifully comfort his Af-  
 „ flicted Brethren, which is their last Refuge; for fear lest  
 „ receiving no Remedy for their Distempers at his hands,  
 „ they come to despair of their Cure. To bend and  
 „ bring to a right temper of mildness his haughty and arro-  
 „ gant Subjects, let him not think much to prostrate him-  
 „ self, and give up something of his Right to win Souls to  
 „ *Christ*. Towards Apostates, and other Prodigal Sons of  
 „ the Order, as Sheep that were lost, let him open the  
 „ bowels of tenderness and compassion and never deny  
 „ them Mercy; knowing assuredly that those Temptations  
 „ are violently strong, which are able to plunge a Soul into  
 „ so great Misery; which if it should please God to permit  
 „ him to make triall of, would perhaps fall into a greater  
 „ Precipice himself. I would have him to be honour'd and  
 „ respected by all, as *Christ's* Vicar, and to be plentifully fur-  
 „ nish'd with all Necessaries, according to his Rank and  
 „ the Poverty of the Order. But he must not be proud of  
 „ his Office, nor take any vain satisfaction therein, nor be  
 „ delighted more with favours than injuries; so that Honours  
 „ make him not change his Manners, but for the better.  
 „ And if at any time he stand in need of more choice or  
 „ plentiful Fare than ordinary, let him not eat it in private,  
 „ but in publick; that others may not be ashamed in their  
 „ Infirmities to provide themselves of the like. It is properly  
 „ his part to dive into the disposition of his Subjects  
 „ consciences, and from secret and hidden veins to gather  
 „ the knowledge of the Truth. All Accusations let him hold  
 in



„ in the beginning for suspected, till upon diligent exami-  
 „ nation the Truth begin to appear. Let him not give ear  
 „ to much babbling, and Tatlers in their accusations let  
 „ him look upon as suspected Persons, and not easily give  
 „ credit to them. In fine he ought to be such, that for Ho-  
 „ nour sake, and out of a desire of continuing in his Office,  
 „ not to omit to execute Justice; in such sort, that no Soul  
 „ perish and be lost by his rigor and over much severity;  
 „ nor on the other side, by soft indulgence and too much  
 „ remissness the vigor of regular Discipline come to relent.  
 „ And let him be fear'd by all, but so as to be lov'd even by  
 „ those that fear him. And for his Office, let him look upon  
 „ it as a heavy Burden, rather than an Honour. Moreover,  
 „ for his Companions I would wish him to choose such  
 „ Persons as are accomplish'd and well-behav'd. Men of  
 „ credit and esteem, wise, prudent, mortify'd, patient, ten-  
 „ der-hearted, of equal affection towards all; receiving no-  
 „ thing for their pains, but barely what is necessary for the  
 „ maintenance of their State; seeking in what they do, only  
 „ the glory of God, the advancement of their Order, the  
 „ benefit of their own Souls, and the Salvation of their  
 „ Brethren; courteous, affable, receiving all that have re-  
 „ course to them with a holy cheerfulness; and in all things  
 „ behaving themselves purely, simply, candidly, according  
 „ to the form of the Holy Gospel and their Profession. Behold  
 „ what the General Minister of our Order ought to be, and  
 „ what kind of Companions he ought to have near his person.

O Divine Spirit! the true Fountain, and incomprehensible  
 Principle of all light and wisdom; influence most powerfully, we  
 humbly beseech thee, the Hearts and Tongues of our Electors  
 in this great concern of the Election of a worthy General. Point  
 out to them the Man, thou shalt make choice of according to  
 thine own heart for a Custos and Pastor, to watch over us and  
 guide us in the way of Salvation. To this end, be thou thyself  
 chief

chief President in their Chapters, assist at all their Counsels, direct their Beginnings, further their Progressions, and perfect their Conclusions; that their Elections may in all things have their desir'd effect, to thy greater glory, and the good of Religion.

§. IX. *And after the Chapter of Pentecost.* ] After their Return from thence. Every Minister and Custos, if they please, and shall think it expedient, may once the same Year in their Custodies. ] In their respective Districts or Jurisdictions. Call their Brethren to Chapter. ] There to propose to them, what things have been debated and resolv'd on in the General Chapter for the good of the Order, to examine the reasons thereof, and consider each one attentively whether they agree with their own Policy and Government, to receive those that are convenient, and give order for the vigorous execution of them; rejecting others that are less profitable in their regards, or contrary to their long receiv'd pious Practices, according to a Priviledge granted by several General Chapters; as Cap. Tolos. 1583. Rom. 1587. 1600. Segov. 1621. There also to reform Abuses, to make Ordinations and Statutes for the more exact observation of the Rule, and the maintaining of Religious Discipline, to elect Officers, and take all other Measures necessary for the good of their Provinces, and Custodies.

§. X. From hence appears the great Utility and Necessity of Chapters, as well General as Provincial, for preserving the whole Body of the Order in a good temper and perfect state of Health; which undoubtedly our Holy Founder had in view in the Institution of them. To whose pious intention, and to the practice and manner of holding Chapters in former times when the Order was in its purity, wherein there was no other discourse, says *Waddingus*, but of Divine things, of the Lives of Saints, of administering Justice, of understanding and observing the Rule, &c. those Vocals

*Moyses came: And calling together the Elders of the People, he declar'd all the Words which our Lord had commanded him. Exod.*

19. 7. Of Provincial Chapters, what things are transacted therein.

Several important Considerations humbly presented to the Vocals of the Order, upon matters relating to Chapters.

*Annal. Tom. 1. an. 1212. n. 45.*

X x

correspond

correspond very little, who now-adays go to them puff'd up with Ambition, and unmindful of the Publick seek only their own Particular ends. Speak of nothing else but of Offices, Dignities, Preferments, Priviledges, Exemptions, Favours, Precedencies. For these they undertake long and troublesome Journeys, make great Expences, ~~use~~ the Provinces and Convents through which they pass, solicit Princes and great Men to favour and advance their pretensions. For these they dissemble, lye, flatter, revenge, detract; suborn, and violate Laws both divine and humane to compass their designs; so far has this wretched itch of Ambition taken possession of their hearts, to the scandal of the World, and the ruine of the Order.

Ambition in  
*Frier - Minors*  
shameful and  
ridiculous.

It is a strange thing, that neither the humility of the Cross, nor our profession of the Gospel, nor the example of an humble Founder, nor our name of *Frier - Minor*; nor our walking on foot like abject, contemptible and scornful people in our journeys, without Money, Horse, or Attendance; nor the nakedness of our Feet, many times deform'd, the sight whereof (as it is said) makes the proud Pea-cock let fall his Train; nor our coarse patch'd Habits upon our backs, nor our short Mantles upon our shoulders, nor our Fools Caps upon our heads, nor our ash-colour'd Garments, the badges of mortality, corruption and worms; nor our begging Almes from door to door, are all able to cure us of this cruel Feaver. Who would think, that such a Figure of a Man as this should ever harbour Ambition? Every thing beneath him, above him, round about him, without and within, preaches nothing else to his Beholders but beggary, contempt, subjection and baseness; and yet cannot hinder him from becoming Proud, from giving the lye to his Profession, and to the specious shew of an humble mortify'd Life; than which nothing can be more contemptible, worthy of scorn, confusion and shame.

Would you clearly see what a Shame it is to one, who professes to aspire after Perfection, to desire to be esteem'd of Men, and to hunt after Offices and Preferments? Let but any body know this your design, and you will find how asham'd you'll be as soon as ever it is perceiv'd. We have an excellent Example hereof in the Gospel. The Apostles walking once at a little distance from our Saviour, so that they thought he could not hear them, fell a disputing, *Who was the Greatest among them*, and when they came home, he ask'd them, *What was the subject of their Discourse upon the way*, but they were so asham'd to find their Ambition and Vanity discover'd that they all held their peace; *Because*, says the Gospel, *they had disputed who was the Greatest amongst them*. Then Jesus calling them to him, said, *Those who command others in the world are look'd upon as the Greatest: But it is not so with you; for he that would be Great among you, let him be as the Least, and let him who would be Chief, be your Servant*. To be Great in the house of God and in a Religious life, is to be Humble and to make ones self Little; and to give place to all, is to raise ones self above all. In this kind of honour a Religious life consists; but that honour which Ambition seeks and pushes you on to, is no true honour, but rather a subject of confusion; and instead of acquiring thereby the Esteem of the world, you make yourself Despicable; because you pass for a Proud Man, which is the worst Opinion can be had of you. You cannot injure your Reputation more, than when you give occasion to make others believe, that you would fain be honour'd and esteem'd, or when you stand much upon your honour and are touch'd in what relates thereunto. The infallible way to be esteem'd by Men, says *S. Chrysostom*, is that of Virtue. Indevour to be a good Religious Man, pious, devout, mortify'd, mild, patient, modest, charitable, chaste, obedient,

Math. 20.

Marc. 9.

Luc. 22.

Hom. 29.

ad Popul.

dient ; labour to be , and to shew yourself the humblest of all in the way you are in , and in all occasions which shall offer themselves , and so you will gain the esteem of every one , for herein consists the Honour of a Religious Man , who has truly renounc'd the world . A plain and coarse Habit , and a mean Office which through humility he takes upon him , become him as well as rich and fine Cloaths do worldly People . Nay , he would otherwise be laugh'd at as one , *who had begun to build , without being able to finish* . Nay , it would be a Shame to him to aim at the esteem and praise of Men ; because to fall again into the sentiments of the world , which a Man had quitted at his entrance into a Religious life , is a kind of returning back to the world , and a petty Apostasy .

Luc. 14. 30.

Abominable  
both to God  
and Man.

Prov. 16. 5.

Prov. 6. 17.

Ecdi. 10. 7.

☉ 11. 32.

But let us further observe , that the Proud and Ambitious are hated both by God and Man ; they are hated by God , according to the saying of the Wise Man , *Every proud man is an abomination to the Lord* , and among the seven things which God hates , he puts in the first place , *A proud look* . The Proud too are hated by Men , according to these words , *Pride makes it self be hated both by God and Man . And the heart of the Proud is like the breath of those whose Lungs are corrupted* ; no Body can come near them , or stay with them . And certainly the World is even with them for their Pride ; because People cross and mortify them in the most sensible part , and in things which are most opposite to what they desire . They seek to be esteem'd and respected by every one , and every one looks upon them as Fools ; they would be lov'd and sought after by every one , and every one hates and shuns them . They who are above them , use them thus , because they endeavour to make themselves their equals ; their Equals also treat them after this manner , because they would set themselves above them ; and their Inferiours do  
the

the same, because they look for that respect from them, which they do not all owe them. In fine, wheresoever we meet Pride, we hate and condemn it. On the other side, the Humble are esteem'd, belov'd and caress'd by all: For as the goodness, innocence and simplicity of little Children makes every body love them, so the same Qualities make every body love the Humble; for their easy, sincere and modest way of behaviour gains the hearts of all. It is a Load-stone which attracts Affections, and a Charm which makes them be belov'd by every one.

To conclude, of all the Religious in God Almighty's Church, the Pride and Ambition of *Frier-Minors*, is the most shameful and ridiculous; who, after having in an extream poor and humble Order, under the Rule and direction of an humble Founder, made profession of being Little, use afterwards all possible means to become Great. We may say of them, what *S. Bernard* did of some upon the like occasion: Because they could not get Preferment in the world, where every body seeks after Honours; at the least that they may appear something, and make a shew above their Companions, they seek after it in Religion, where every body despises it but themselves. You need not require any other Argument of the incapacity of a Person, and of his unsuitness for an office, than his hunting after it with so much eagerness, injustice, and servile complacence. Honour looks upon such people with disdain; it resembles the Shadow of a body, running from those that follow it, and following those that shun it." Fly therefore, says our Holy Father, „ Ambition, covet not Superiority among your Brethren. „ Remember, that he who infinitely excells both Men and „ Angels, coming into the world, vouchsaf'd to be subject „ not only to Angels, but to Men also; and reputing himself inferior to all, said: *I am not come to be minister'd* „ to, but to minister.

*Hom. 4. sup.  
Missus est.*

*Opust. dub.  
Append.  
Serm. 7.*

*Math. 20. 28.*

Alas, O my Soul ! whereon should we build our Ambitions, if not upon the blood of the holy Lamb ? At the foot of the Cross we behold a *Jesus* cover'd with blood, crown'd with thorns and reproaches, who warns us to be Humble ; and at the same time we eagerly pursue worldly Glory. Do we know better than God, in what true Honour consists, that we must seek after that which he did avoid, and not imitate that which he follow'd ? what do we else, by our immeasurable hunting after Honours, amongst the Ignominies of *Jesus-Christ*, but abandon ourselves to Dishonour, and make no other use of the Cross, so solemnly planted at the gates of our Convents, but only to be a witness of our Infidelity ? O *Jesus* ! the Father of all true Glories, thou shalt from henceforth be my Preferment, my Office, my Crown. All greatness where thou art not, shall be to me meer baseness. I will mount up to thee by the stairs of Humility, since by those thou can'st down to honour me.

What we are bound to accept of Offices, when lawfully chosen.

But as we ought not with the spirit of Pride and Ambition to hunt after Dignities and Preferments ; so on the other side we must not refuse them, when impos'd upon us by Authority ; but every one that is Canonically elected to any Charge, may, and ought to perswade himself, that such Promotion is absolutely according to the will of God, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which to oppose is down right wickedness. Yea, if you foresee that some considerable damage is like to insue to any Province or Convent, by the incapacity and unworthiness of another Person to be set over them if you do not accept of such an Office, in refusing it, you commit a Mortal sin, is the opinion of Divines with *S. Thomas*. And their reason is ; for that every Man's Private good, whether it be Peace, Repose, Study, Prayer, Contemplation or any such like, which are commonly wont to induce learned and virtuous Men to refuse Offices, ought to give place to the good of the *Weal & Publick* ; this being incomparably more worthy than the other, as the Whole of every Body is more excellent than any of its Parts. And there-  
fore

*Quodlib. 5.  
Art. 22.*

fore *S. Gregory* says, as he is related *Cap. Scripturis* 8. q. 1. If any one refuse to feed God Almighty's Sheep, when able, he plainly shews he has no Love for their chief Pastor. For if the only Begotten of the Father, for the Publick good of all Mankind came forth from his Fathers bosom to accomplish our Happines; what shall we answer, if we prefer our own Private concern and satisfaction, before the Common profit and salvation of our Neighbour? And truly Religion would be ill provided of a Means to preserve itself, if it were lawful for Subjects to refuse to accept of Offices, when impos'd upon them by Obedience. We do not deny, but that Humility may be allow'd sometimes to decline taking upon it Employments for the service of the Publick, when it can be conveniently done without prejudice to the Body; but not otherwise, especially when the Command of Superiours is positive therein. For then it is true what *Abbas* says, in *Cap. nisi cum pridem. de renuntiat*. That Humility, which raises itself up against Obedience, is Pride, not Humility; but as is there related in the *Text*. thou shalt then preserve in thyself true Humility, when by means thereof thou shalt shun a High place, and yet through Obedience shalt not refuse to take it. Wherefore we must conclude with *S. Gregory*: In as much as Man is unable to dive into the secrets of Heaven, and to understand the disposition of Providence concerning himself, so much the more willingly ought he to submit his neck to the Yoke. And since he is altogether ignorant of the manner how the Office impos'd upon him is to be executed, and of the means which the Divine Providence will make use of to compass its designs therein, as he ought not to be eager and importune in craving it, so likewise must he not be obstinate in rejecting it.

*Lib. 1. Epist. 38.*

Ah, my Soul! know'st thou what thou do'st, when thou shake'st off thy shoulders a Burthen impos'd upon thee by thy Superiours for



PROV. II. 26.

For the service of the Community ; when , being indow'd with knowledge , wisdom , eloquence and other noble Parts , thou hid'st them under an unprofitable , or rather a damnable Silence ; and out of fear , sloth , or an indiscreet humility fail'st in time of need to shew thyself beneficial to thy Brethren ? By so doing , thou play'st both the Thief and the Proprietor ; thou robb'st Religion of her due , to whom thou art indebted for all thou hast ; thou apply'st to thine own Private use , what is given for the Common. Remember what is written ; *He that hides Corn , shall he cursed among the People ; but blessing upon the head of them that sell.* O my God , I absolutely renounce it , and am ready to give all I am or have for the benefit of the Publick ; I willingly submit my neck to holy Obedience in accepting this Office , since it is thy divine pleasure. It is true , dear Lord , that I am conscious of my own weakness , but thy Strength is able to support me ; which I do therefore most humbly beg of thee , who never fail'st to assist those who sincerely crave it for the discharge of their Duty.

For Justice  
contend for thy  
Soul , and to  
death strive  
for Justice. Ec-  
cli. 4. 33.

This being the proper place of Chapters , I cannot pass it over without taking notice here before I conclude , of two or three more very Material Points relating to this matter. One is , that our Vocals in their Elections , will please seriously to reflect upon the many and enormous Sins , which those intangle themselves in , who in their Promotions to the employments and offices of the Order , have more regard to Persons than to Merits , and to their own Passions and Interests , than to the Vertues of their Brethren , and the Publick good ; preferring in a Friend , an unworthy person before a worthy , or a less worthy before a more worthy. But laying aside all favour , friendship , private interests and affections , they will use their utmost indeavours , that the most able and best qualify'd Superiours be set over the Provinces and Convents of the Order ; as the most signal piece of Service they can render to Religion , their dear Mother. The rather , for that our Load *Jesus - Christ* will otherwise require at their hands the blood of those Sheep that shall perish through the

the incapacity, negligence, and bad conduct of evil Pastors of their partial and unjust choosing.

O prime and essential Equity ! who hast plac'd Justice amongst the chief of thy Precepts, saying ; *Thou shalt justly do that which is Just* : Grant what thou commandest, and let this Vertue so flourish in my Soul, that without distinction of Persons, Fear, Affection or Favour, I may duly execute the same in all the elections, promotions and distribution of Offices committed to my charge ; to thy greater Glory, the honour of Religion, and the Salvation of my Neighbour's Soul.

*Dent. 16. 20.*

Another thing to be recommended, is, that in their Chapters they will not easily consent to the enacting of new Laws, and the multiplying of Precepts and Ordinations one upon the back of another ; so to avoid the danger of Contempt and Oblivion ; and that poor Subjects may not be overwhelm'd, and Medicines prove more hurtful than the Diseases. There are *Statutes* enough in the Order already made, if well enough observ'd. To which if we continually add new ones, they will be little set by, and at last it will come to that pass, that neither New nor Old will be regarded, but all run to confusion. So that we shall have reason to say what *Pliny* did upon the like occasion, That the City, which should have been establish'd and maintain'd by Laws, was destroy'd by Laws. And hereupon *Tacitus* observes, That an undoubted mark of a corrupt and decaying Republick, is the too great variety and multiplicity of its Laws.

For the rest which concerns the administration of Justice, and namely the delivering of their Opinions upon all weighty affairs that happen in Chapters, it is necessary they be Masters of these three Qualities, to acquit themselves well of their charge and make themselves usefull therein, for the honour of God and Religion ; towit, Prudence, Integrity, and Resolution. Prudence, to be able to discern aright, to deliberate, and examine things according to Time, Place, Af-

Y y      fairs

fairs treated, with solidity of judgment ; for Business have an infinity of faces when they first present themselves to our thoughts, and he is really a wise Man and an able Counsellor, that can lay his finger upon the point of an Affair, and give advice how to grasp it, as it is said, at the right end. Integrity, to weigh all in the ballance of Honesty and Conscience, without favour or affection, distinction of persons, or the ties of flesh and blood. Resolution, boldly to speak their minds, to stand up for, and courageously maintain and execute what has been well resolv'd on, though they are sure to incur thereby the displeasure of higher Prelates. For in Chapters they are Counsellors and not Subjects, and there to be Silent either through fear or flattery, would be shamefully to betray their Trust, and to do a notable wrong both to God and Religion. For as *S. Austin* says, That man who conceals the Truth out of fear of offending any Power upon earth whatsoever, draws the anger of God upon himself, because he fears Man more than God. He that conceals the Truth, and he that tells a Lye, are both guilty ; one because he will not do Good, and the other because he do's Ill.

*For thy Soul  
be not asham'd  
to say the Truth  
Eccli. 4. 24.*

*Ep. ad Casulan.*

O divine Fountain of all Knowledge ! who freely open'st the veins of Wisdom to them that humbly confess their own Indigence, and heartily implore thy heavenly Assistance. Distil, I beseech thee, one little rivulet thereof into my imprudent and ignorant Spirit ; that in all Chapters and Assemblies whereto I am call'd, being by it powerfully sway'd, instructed and directed ; I may know How, When, and Where, to act, omit, consult, judge, order and execute, wisely, uprightly, discreetly, and undauntedly, all that which is conformable to thy divine will and pleasure.

Guide likewise and govern my Tongue, O God of Truth ! and preserve me from all Silence prejudicial to my Neighbour, from any the least Lye in my words, Infidelity in my promises, Hypocrisy in my behaviour, or Dissimulation in any of my doings, upon any pretension of humane prudence, or intention of pleasing

ing higher Superiours. O let my Heart walk simply, sincerely, innocently in thy presence; and let my Tongue, Hands, and Behaviour be conformable to my Heart; that Truth making up a holy Harmony in my whole Man, I may perfectly please thee here, O increased Verity! and joyfully praise thee in thy blessed Eternity.



## Of Preachers.

### CHAP. IX.

*Let not the Brethren Preach in the Diocess of any Bishop, when by him it shall be forbidden them. And let no Brother presume upon any account to Preach to the People, unless he be Examined, and Approved by the General Minister of this Fraternity, and by him have the Office of Preaching conferr'd upon him. Also I admonish and exhort the said Brethren, in the Sermons which they make, that their words be Examined and Chast, to the Profit and Edification of the People, denouncing to them Vice and Vertue, Pain and Glory, with Brevity of speech; because our Lord made an abbreviated word upon Earth.*

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|--|--|
| §.I. Of Respect and Submission due to Bishops and Car-<br>rates, and thus we ought<br>not to Preach within their<br>Districts without their lea-<br>ves. | II. Of the Manner of making<br>Preachers and Confessors. |
|  | III. The Office of Preachers.                            |
|  | IV. The Function of Confes-<br>sors.                     |

### THE EXPOSITION.

§.I. **L**et not the Brethren Preach in the Diocess of any Bishop. ] In any of the Churches within his District into whatso-  
ever City you  
Y y ij that

*nter, and they  
 receive you not,  
 so your ways  
 out. Luc. 10. 10.  
 To a Priest,  
 and Elder hum-  
 ble thy Soul,  
 and to a Great  
 Man bow thy  
 head. And re-  
 sist not against  
 the face of the  
 Mighty, nei-  
 ther labour a-  
 gainst the stre-  
 am of the Ri-  
 ver. Eccli. 4.  
 7; 32.  
 The Order of  
 S. Francis im-  
 mediately  
 subject to the  
 Pope.*

that are under his Jurisdiction. *When by him it shall be for-  
 bidden them.*] Positively, formally, expressly. Which is to be  
 inviolably observ'd under strict obligation of Sin; unless the  
 Pope's Holiness do otherwise ordain for the good of the  
 Church, and give leave notwithstanding the Bishop's pro-  
 hibition. For then the dignity of the Apostolical See is to be  
 preferr'd, being superiour to all others.

This Respect and Submission is due to Mitred heads,  
 on the account of their eminent Quality, being Successors  
 to the Apostles, and those from whom we immediately re-  
 ceive our Ordination. And therefore it is fit we yield them  
 so much respect at least, as not to Preach but with their  
 good likings, in those Places where they have any thing to  
 do. Though as to our Mission and the Office of Preaching,  
 we have it from the Pope himself; to whom by our Rule  
 and Profession we are immediately subject, independently of  
 all Bishops, and other Prelates of the Church of God what-  
 soever; without whose leave therefore we may Preach, hear  
 Confessions, administer the Sacraments, and exercise all the  
 other functions of an Apostolical Mission, by the sole Autho-  
 rity of the Pope, imparted immediately to the Prelates of  
 the Order, as appears from this, and the XII. Chapter of  
 our Rule; in both which places there is no mention made  
 of any Presentation, Examination, or Approbation of Bishops  
 for our Preachers, Confessors, and Missioners; but only our  
 own Superiours, to wit Generals and Provincials, from whom  
 we have our Power. Yet notwithstanding, it is our blessed  
 Founder's pleasure, and intention here in this Text; out of  
 respect to these eminent Prelates of the Church of God; that  
 we forbear Preaching against their express orders. Yea, not  
 only against theirs, but likewise against the Curates wills, within  
 their respective Parishes; whom he would have us to fear,  
 love, and honour as our Lords and Masters, and for that reason

*Test. S. P.*

reason to do nothing whereby to incur their displeasure, or which may favour of the least irreverence and disrespect towards either one or the other.

Wherefore, my dear Brethren, let us, as becomes true *Friar-Minors*, and Heirs of our *Seraphical* Father's Humility, shew ourselves very respectful in all our deportments towards them; not only in reference to Preaching, but likewise upon all other occasions, yielding an exact and ready compliance to all their Ordinations and Commands, as far as is consistent with the Privileges of our Order; which, though we may, and ought to stand up for, maintain and defend against them, as Favours granted by a higher Power, in consideration of the signal Services which our Order has render'd to the Church of God; yet must it always be done with Modesty, Submission, and Reverence, due to the high character of Bishops and Priests, and becoming the low and humble state of Beggars. By which means we shall gain their good wills, edify the People, and our Preaching in all respects will sooner meet with its desir'd effect, when encourag'd and supported by their Authority. This is what our Holy Founder very particularly gives us to understand in one of his little Works, where he discourses after the following manner.

„ O my dear Brethren ! you are altogether ignorant of God  
 „ Almighty's will concerning me, and you go about foolishly  
 „ to take out of my hands a Victory, which I am to gain  
 „ over the World. For it is our Lord *Jesus-Christ's* pleasure,  
 „ that I overcome it by a profound Submission, and draw  
 „ all Souls to him greatly by the example of my Humility.  
 „ My dear Brethren, you shall convert all the world with  
 „ your Preaching, if you humble yourselves to all the world.  
 „ It behoves you therefore in the first place to convert the  
 „ Prelates of the people, and gain their favour by a holy  
 „ Humility and Reverence; that so they may see your edifying

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
 Colloq. 14.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Callat. 12.*

„ fying behaviour, and be pleas'd with the Reverence you  
 „ yield them. They then will pray and intreat you to Preach.  
 „ and command all to be present at your Sermons. Believe  
 „ me, such Humility will gain you more Favours at their  
 „ hands, than any Privilege whatsoever you can pretend to.  
 „ And again in another place of his Works he speaks thus :  
 „ My most dearly beloved Brethren, we are sent to the assis-  
 „ tance of the Clergy, for the Salvation of Souls ; that what  
 „ is wanting in them, we may supply. Both of us shall re-  
 „ ceive our reward, not according to our dignity, but ac-  
 „ cording to our labour and pains. Brethren, know ye, that  
 „ the gaining of Souls to God is most acceptable to him ;  
 „ which we shall more effectually compass by holding a good  
 „ correspondence, than by dissensions and discord with the  
 „ Clergy. But if they oppose you, and hinder the Salvation  
 „ of any one, God is the revenger, and he will repay them  
 „ in time. Be subject therefore, and yield all due reverence  
 „ and submission to the Prelates of God's Church ; that as  
 „ much as lys in you, no evil ferment, jealousy or emu-  
 „ lation may spring up among you. If you be Children of  
 „ peace, you will gain both them and the People ; and this  
 „ will be more pleasing to God, than if you gain'd the Peo-  
 „ ple alone, with the scandal and offence of the Clergy.  
 „ Cover their manifold weaknesses, and supply their defects ;  
 „ and by doing thus, you will shew yourselves to be more  
 „ Humble.

O sweet Jesus ! who art truly honour'd of the humble. Give  
 me true Humility, whereby I may acknowledge my own unwor-  
 thiness, and yield to thee the honour which thou deserv'st. And  
 since all thy Actions, O dear Redeemer, are my Instructions :  
 Grant I humbly beseech thee, that I may, in the Vertue of  
*Observance* also become thy perfect imitator ; who willingly gav'st  
 honour to Priests, Scribes, Doctors, and all people plac'd in  
 Authority. O let me be ever ready to bow to my Betters, sub-  
 mit

mit to my Superiours, and reverence all persons eminent in Power, signal in Piety, and excellent in Vertue, as nearer Images of thy Divinity, whence all authority and power is deriv'd.

S. II. *And let no Brother presume upon any account to Preach.* ] A formal Sermon; not a Panegyrick, or an Oration. *To the People.* ] Not to Religious assembl'd together in their Convents. *Unless he be Examin'd.* ] Concerning his capacity, elocution, learning, discretion, age, manners, life, zeal. *And Approv'd.* ] Judg'd sufficiently qualify'd for it. *By the General Minister of this Fraternity.* ] Or by his Commissary: Or else, according to the Pope's *Declaration*, by the Provincial and Diffinitors assembl'd together in Chapter, for their respective Subjects; whose power notwithstanding the General can limit, or suspend upon occasion, they being in this case only his Delegates. *And by him have the Office of Preaching conferr'd upon him.* ] Instituted by the said General Minister, Commissary, or Chapter. Which they by no means ought to grant, without first examining the Party; being by this Precept oblig'd to do it, either by themselves, or by others; unless in some there should be so evident a certainty of their Abilities and due Qualifications, that it were superfluous to examine them.

The same Method is likewise to be observ'd, though here not express'd, in examining, approving, and admitting or instituting the Confessors of the Order. Although neither one or other of them can compleatly exercise their respective Charges, but upon certain conditions requir'd by the Council of Trent, *sess. 5. de Reform. cap. 2.* Which are, first as to Preachers, that they ask the Bishops benediction, to Preach in our own Churches; and to Preach in those not of the Order, they must have his leave. And as for Confessors, though thy can, being once instituted or admitted, hear the Confessions of the Order without any farther ceremony, the Superiours

*How shall they Preach, unless they be Sent?*  
Rom. 10. 15.  
Whose Office it is to make Preachers and Confessors of the Order.  
Nic. III. art. 9.

What Conditions are requir'd by the Council of Trent for the exercise of these Charges.



Superiours not contradicting them; yet to hear those subject to the Bishop, whether Religious, Priests, or Lay-people, they must have, besides the faculty of the Order, the Bishops leave and approbation, and likewise undergo another examination, if the Bishop requires it.

O Father of lights! from whom all good and celestial Gifts do descend, clothe me with vertue from on High, whereby I may become a worthy Minister of thy Holy Gospel. And permit not that without such vertue, and the approbation of Superiours, I rashly expose myself in undertaking what I am not able to perform.

Instructions  
for Preachers

§. III. The Brethren being after this manner ordain'd Minnisters of the word of God, it is their parts diligently to prepare themselves for the discharge of this important Duty. Study, Retirement, Prayer, Temperance, Mortification, Humility, Piety are the best means to become perfect herein.

Spusc. Tom. 3.  
Grac. 6.

„ And therefore let them not, says our Holy Father, upon  
„ the account of their Office of Preaching, neglect holy Prayer,  
„ to go a Begging, to work sometimes with their Hands,  
„ and to exercise themselves in such other low and humble Im-  
„ ployments, no less than the rest of their Brethren, for  
„ Example's sake, and the gaining of Souls. For the People  
„ are edify'd at the Example of their Preachers, do more willing-  
„ ly apply themselves to Prayer and Devotion, and more rea-  
„ dily follow their steps in imbracing mean and vile Offices.  
„ But if themselves perform none of these things, they cannot  
„ without their own confusion, prejudice and condemna-  
„ tion, admonish and exhort their Auditors to the practice  
„ of them; because according to the Example of our Saviour,  
„ they ought to Do before they Teach, and at the same time  
„ both Do and Teach. But as for the Method of preaching,  
„ they must learn it from the best experienc'd, and most cele-  
„ brated Masters in this *Mystery*; by whose Examples, it were  
„ to be wish'd, the Younger sort would rather frame them-  
„ selves

vs, than be carry'd away with an itch to please certain Ears, and so many unjoynted Judgments, who are devoted to the Beauty of language, and adore discourses replenish'd with a Youthful eloquence, but devested of wisdom, and only big with noise and wind, having no sinews for support, and less sting to transfix a heart. It is a Note one do's not always please God when he seeks over much to please those who like nothing but such Vanities. Hear what *S. Paul* says, the Pattern of Preachers : *Do I now perswade Men, or God? Or do I seek to please Men? If I yet did please Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.* And again : *As we were approv'd of God, that the Gospel should be committed to us, so we speak : Not as pleasing Men, but God, who proves our Hearts. For neither have we been at any time in the word of Adulation, as you know : Nor in occasion of Avarice, God is witness : Nor seeking Glory of Men, neither of you, nor of others.* Care must be had of City-bruits and vulgar opinions, as the Eagle regards Flies. Light never blush'd to be despis'd by Rear-mice, and a prime Spirit is not troubl'd at the sinister judgments which the Ignorant make, so that he learn to cast up his reckoning with God for whom he labours. Onions hinder the attraction of the Adamant, and all these popular Opinions do nothing but disturb a Spirit on which they make impression. If he who Preaches, has no other intention but merely to please his Auditors, nor they any other purpose but to sooth their own Curiosity; he has wearied his Lungs, and they in the mean space have had the itch in their Ears. The time will come, when he shall have the worm in his Heart to gnaw him, and they the tinkling in their Ears for their punishment. The Seller and the Buyer shall be paid with the coin of Reprobation. Who speaks not, and who hears not, to do and become better, abuses a word sign'd with the blood.

Gal. 1. 10.

1. Thess. 2. 4.

of *Jesus-Christ*, the loss whereof is most dangerous, and the account incalculable.

Wherefore O my Soul ! in thy Sermons beware of Pride and Vain-Glory, which is a worm that gnaws and consumes all thy good works. Busy not thyself in catching Flies in the pulpit but Men, bear not the air but the hearts of thy Auditors, nor preach thyself but the word of God. For all this being an Argument of weakness in thee, it cannot but much lessen thy esteem and reputation with Men ; and from God what canst thou expect for it, who says : *Verily I say to you, They already have receiv'd their Reward ?*

*Math. 6. 3.*

Good God ! how knowing would Preachers be, did they understand, as says *S. Paul*, how to speak, *both on Gods part, before God, and in Jesus-Christ*, as being shut up within the Word, before they bring forth a word. And Auditors should be well instructed, if they all heard with the Ear, through which *Jesus-Christ* enters. To preach God and his divine Attributes, Wisdom, Justice, Power, Providence, Mercy, Goodness; the four last things, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell; the Immortality of the Soul, the Punishments and Rewards of the other life, hatred of Vice and love of Vertue, with a discourse firm and rational; and first of all to lead the way, by performing himself what he wishes others may practice. This is the Mark whereat all Preaching should aim, which we cannot miss hitting, if we follow the Instructions which our Holy Founder gives us in the ensuing Text.

*The words of the wise shall be ponder'd in a ballance.*

*Ecclesi. 21. 28.*

*The words of our Lord be chaff words.*

*Pf. 11. 7.*

*Also I admonish and exhort the said Brethren, in the Sermons which they make, that their words be Examind. ] Well ponder'd, prepar'd, digested; not ex-tempore, not rash, not full of novelties, not suspected, not favouring of errors. And Chast. ] Modest, grave, not provoking to laughter, not idle, not scurrilous, not scandal, not prophane, not*

not libertine, not sordid; but pure, sincere, and religious. *To the Profit,*] Instructing the Faithful in those matters that concern their Salvation; such as are the ten Commandments, the seven Sacraments, the Creed, the Ceremonies and Rites of the Catholick Church, and such other Doctrine as conduces to the reformation of Manners, and the exciting Devotion. Of these *S. Paul* is to be understood when he says: *These things I will have thee to avouch earnestly; that they which believe in God, be careful to excell in good works. These things be good and profitable for Men. But foolish Questions, and Genealogies, and Contentions, and Controversies of the Law avoid: For they are unprofitable and vain. And the Edification of the People.*] Not studying to adorn their Sermons with vain Rhetorick, affected Phrases, high flown Conceits, dry speculative Notions; not using such speeches as tend to their own Praise, or their Orders; not such as savour of Gain or proper Interest; not such as are scoffing, seditious, or reflecting. That their life and reputation be unspotted; that they be zealous, courageous and undaunted in maintaining the maxims and verities of Christian Religion against libertine and prophane Spirits, in boldly declaiming against the abuses and errors of the Age, in standing up for Ecclesiastical liberty, the Pope's prerogative, the honour and dignity of the Apostolical *Roman Sea*, &c. asserting its rights against Princes and Tyrants; without either being terrify'd with their threats, or allur'd by their promises, but prepar'd to suffer a thousand deaths, rather than to depart one hairs breadth from the sentiments of the Catholick Church. So that should all the world fall from their faith, and from their reverence and obedience due to the Pope's Holiness and the Church of *Rome*, we *Frier-Minors* are by Vow oblig'd in a special manner to stick close to it, and never to quit that rock of Truth, against which we are assur'd the gates of Hell will never prevail,

*Tit. 3. 8.*

*Before God, in Christ we speak; but all things, my Dearest, for your Edification. 2. Cor. 12. 19.*

Come; O Holy Spirit! upon the Preachers of our Order, illustrate their understanding with a beam of thy divine light; and animate their courage boldly to denounce the Truth. Come likewise upon all their Auditors, and let thy right Hand work in the one and in the other so marvellous a mutation, that our blessed Redeemer be obey'd and belov'd, and thy Divine Will be known, executed, and held in reverence by all.

*We preach  
Christ; warn-  
ing every Man  
(of Vice) and  
teaching every  
Man in all  
wisdom (of  
Virtue); that  
we may present  
every Man per-  
fect in Christ  
Jesus. Coloss.  
1: 28.*

*Denouncing to them Vice and Vertue.]* The hideous Deformity and Malice of the one, and the Beauty and Excellency of the other. This last, the great Man *Boetius*, the Eye of the Roman Senate and Ornament of the Church, in some sort gives us to understand, when speaking of the punishments of the Damn'd, he says: There needs neither Wheels, Tortures, nor Gibbets to punish the Wicked. He who might only shew them the beauty of Vertue in the form of a Lightning-flash, and say to them, Behold wretched creatures, behold what you have lost by your folly, the sorrow they would conceive for their loss would be so sensible, that no keen Ralour, devouring Flames, gnawing Vultures might put them to a more exquisite Torment. What a charming Beauty then must Vertue be!

O amiable Vertue, O golden Mean, O true and straight way to Heaven! How few do find thee? And how few, Alas! are they who follow thee? Ah, my Soul! what more would'st thou wish in this life than to be good and perfect, what more in the next than to be eternally happy? Both which Vertue puts thee into possession of. It frees thee from the slavery of thy Body; it subjects thy Senses to Reason, and thy Reason to God; it makes thee Master of thy Passions, and smoothes the path leading to the Sovereign End for which thou wast created. Animate thyself then with these considerations towards the acquiring of it, and never desist till thou art absolute Master of this lovely Quality, which to the Damn'd is so great a Torment to have eternally lost.

No w as to the Deformity and Malice of Vice, O Christians, if you know it not, it is an infinite Evil, for that it strikes at the

the head of an infinite Deity, and it is an horrible thing to think on, as much as is possible, it annihilates God and the whole fountain of Essences, Felicities, and Mercies. Do you not consider a Transgression increases according as the Person interres'd is of great and eminent Quality? It is one thing to offend a Peasant, another thing a Marchant, another thing a Judge, another a King. But he who offends all Kings and all Judges of the earth, or should thrust a knife into the throat of a Million of men, would he not seem very criminal? Nay, were all the Greatness, Grace, and Majesty of a hundred thousand Worlds pour'd and quintessenc'd in one Body, what would it be in comparison of God, but one grain of Sand? And then for a Creature to invade his Creator, in his will to infringe and annul the Divinity; O horror of Abomination! To say to God Omnipotent, all Good, and all Holy: You will give me a Law, and I will play the unbridl'd Colt, I will take it off myself, and will admit no Law-maker: You created me for yourself, and I will live for myself, and be the Sovereign Good of myself: You created a world for my use, and I will people it with Monsters, which shall be my Sins: You redeem'd and reconcil'd me by the blood of your Son, and I will contemn and trample it under foot: You will be a Judge to chastise me, and I make as much account of all your Thunder-strokes, as of broken Rushes. To despise God as a Law-maker, as a Creator, as a Father, as a Redeemer, as a Judge, as God, as All; what Malice, and Abyss of confusion! And yet this is, what miserable Man do's every time he commits a Mortal Sin.

O wretch of mud and mortar! How art thou so proud against Almighty God? O Vessel of clay, O worm of the earth! How dar'st thou contradict, and oppose thyself against thy Maker? To what further point can thy dotage arrive, than to provoke the majesty

majesty of so dread a Sovereign ? Return, return into thyself, O abominable Creature ! And if it be but for thine own interest, cease to offend him that can free thee from so many Evils, and procure thee so many Goods. Who shall not fear thee, O King of the Worlds ! Who shall not abhor so great a Mischief, as is Mortal Sin ? Pardon, O God of Mercies, this my more than brutish Stupidity, and help me, I most humbly beseech thee, that I may never more return to my vomit, and fall into so horrible confusion, blindness, and ingratitude towards thee.

In all thy  
works remem-  
ber thy latter  
ends, and thou  
wilt not sin  
for ever. Eccli.  
7. 40.

*Pain and Glory.* ] Hell and Heaven, that to terrify Sinners, this to animate the Just. *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes, that the belief of one God, and the faith of one Judgment are in the Soul of man by like consequence necessary; and that the Heathens in the dead obscurity of Infidelity were not able to shut their eyes against this verity. They all agree in the Notion of a living God, who knows, sees, judges of the good and bad deeds of this Life, ordains rewards for Vertue, and punishments for Vice. It is the order of the Creator, who governs the world with two Hands, which are Justice and Mercy; if you take away one of them, you maim him. The divine Essence holds these two Perfections, as the two scales of a Ballance, always equally pois'd. They are the two *Bases*, and as it were, the two fundamental Laws, upon which he has establish'd the policy of the Universe. As he is a severe revenger of Offences, so is he most liberal in Rewards. If he present on one side the Sword of justice to sinners, on the other he extends to the just the Olive of peace and benignity. If he has thunder-bolts to crush rebellious heads; he has palms, unexhaustible treasures, joys, sweetnesses, delights, sources of benedictions, and infinite felicities, wherewith to crown the faithful services of his Elect, and to animate them in so great a heap of tribulations.

This was it, which comforted the Martyrs in those hideous tor-

torments, when their Souls were torn out of their Bodies with incomparable violence. For although mortal Members yielded to the sword of Persecution, yet they beheld, though with an eye drench'd in blood and tears, the bright Glory which waited on them, and saw as in a Mirrour the thorns of those prodigious Sufferings dispos'd all into Crowns; which made them to sacrifice themselves in as many Torments as they had Members, to preach on crosses, sing in flames, and triumph on wheels. There *S. Stephen* saw his Stones chang'd into as many Rubies, to serve for matter of veneration to Piety, and an example of Courage for all posterity. There *S. Lawrence* look'd on his flames and burning coals turn'd into roses and delights. There *S. Felicitas*, the Mother of triumphs and glories, beheld seven Sons, who receiv'd her with Palms in their hands into the beautiful pavilions of Heaven, where all Torments made an end to give beginning to infinite Comforts. There infine so many holy *Anchorits*, who fill'd the desarts with their tears, walk'd on scorching sands, trampled dragons under foot, and stiff'd the concupiscences of flesh in snows and thorns, beheld their Bodies (extenuated here and worn out with austerities and mortifications) to become glorious, spiritual, immortal, agile, incorruptible, priviledg'd with favours, and guilded with the bright splendors of the body of *Jesus*; their Souls replenish'd with the clear Vision, Fruition, and lovely Joy of God; and their Senses with all manner of contentments, and the beauty of Objects that satiate and overflow them with everlasting delights: Which they were to enjoy in those glorious Empyrean Mansions; where Heat, Cold, Hunger, Thirst, Pains, Infirmities, and all the Diseases of this miserable life which attack us here on every side, shall not any longer approach; but a perpetual Joy inaccessible to all Sorrow shall there reign, accompany'd with all Good desirable, and an eternal

Come ye Bless'd of my Father, possesse the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the foundation of the world. *Math.* 24. 34.

Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have enter'd into the heart of Man, the things which God has prepar'd for them that love him.

*1. Cor.* 2. 9. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be anymore Pain. *Apoc.* 21. 4.

They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy House; and of the Torrent of thy pleasure thou shalt make them drink. *Pf.* 35. 9.

nal



nal banishment of all Evil. Where Youth waxes not old, where Life has no limits, where Beauty decays not, where Treasures wast not, where the Moth corrupts not, where Thieves dig not through and steal, where Honours change not, where Pleasures loath not, where Health impairs not, and where Love knows not what it is to be cold.

Rf. 83. 1.

O blessed Palace! O Paradise of ineffable delights, and worthy Dwelling of our God! *O how delectable are thy Tabernacles, Lord God of Vertues!* My Soul desires, and through the greatness of desire faints, whilst it thinks on these Palaces of my Lord. O when shall I come to inhabit them! Think you, I shall enter into the joys of my God? Shut yourselves, O mine Eyes, shut yourselves, and do not any longer behold what is on Earth; because all is vile, base, and of no account in respect of that which you shall see in Heaven. O blessed ignominies, dishonours, and contempts, whose end is so great Glory! O happy pains, which cause the Body to be impossible! O precious mortifications and labours, which are rewarded with so great Solace! O how well did the Apostle *S. Paul* say, *That the Passions of this time are not condign to the Glory to come that shall be reveal'd in us!* Animate thyself therefore, O my Soul, to bear in thy body the mortification of *Jesus*, because thy body so humbl'd, shall be conform to his glorify'd; and receive in thy flesh his sorrows and torments, since the reward is so great.

Rom. 8. 18.

Philipp. 3. 21.

Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Math. 25. 41.

Where their worm dy's nat, and the fire quenches not. Marc. 9. 45. The way of sin-

Now on the other side, behold the chastisements of the Wicked, behold the torments of Hell! O ye brutish and sensual Libertines, who live in a continual contempt of God's anger, would you know what Hell is? Ask the great *Tertullian*, and he will answer you: Hell is a treasury of fire, kindl'd by the breath of God for the punishment of the Damn'd; Hell is an ugly and deep sink and sewer, wherein all the ordures of Ages are thrown. Ask of *Hugo of S. Victor*, what Hell is? And he will reply, A bottom without bottom, which shuts the gate against all Hopes, and opens it to all Despairs. Ask of *S. John*.

What

what Hell is? And he will tell you aloud and plainly. Hell is the great Lake of God's anger. It is a great Pool of fire and brimstone, perpetually inflam'd with strong and vigorous breaths of the Omnipotent; where the Damned burn and smoke in flames which wast not nor shall ever be consum'd, are scorch'd through the whole Body with remediless fires, broil'd alive in their own grease, and broil'd with stains of their impurities not to be taken off. Where they see nothing but pits of fire and flaming furnaces without ease, relaxation, remedy, change, or diminution of Sentence, so long as there shall be a God, for Ever and Ever, in *secula seculorum*. Where they are continually gnawn, rack'd and torn with remorse of conscience, frightful visions, horrible imaginations, with vultures, gibbets, tortures, snakes, burning pincers, and all the instruments of Terroure. Where they breath no air, but of burning coals; where they have no stars and lights, but the fire of their torments; no nights, but of palpable darkness; no beds, but the couches of Aspics and Basilisks; no language, but blasphemy; no order, but confusion; no hope, but despair; nor no patience, but rage, which causes them to break into furies and unprofitable frenzies, without any Body so much as taking pity of them, or affording them any the least comfort in their infinite Misery.

O Palace of God, say they, which we have lost! O ugly dens of Dragons into which we are tumbld! O brightness of Paradise, which shalt be nothing to us! O hideous darkness which shalt eternally be our inheritance! O goodly and triumphant Company of elect Souls, with whom we should eternally have liv'd, had not our wretchedness seal'd up our eyes! O infernal countenances of enraged Devils, which shall hereafter be our objects and perpetual companions! O torrent of Delights which pourest thyself upon those blessed Spirits, how have we turn'd thee into a lake fill'd with pitch.

A aa

sulphur,

ners is pav'd  
with stones,  
and in their  
end, Hell, and  
Darkness, and  
Pains. Eccli.  
21. 11.

Our Lord Om-  
nipotent will be  
reveng'd on  
them, in the  
Day of Judge-  
ment he will  
visit them. For  
he will give  
fire, and  
Worms into  
their flesh, that  
they may be  
burnt, and may  
feel for ever.  
Judith 16. 20,  
21.

Horrible La-  
mentations  
of the Dam-  
ned.

Sulphur, and scorching flames ! O Couch of king *Salomon* ; how have we given thee away for a bed of Coals ! O God ; O God ; whom we have lost, and whom we cannot lose ! we have lost him in quality of a Sovereign Good, yet have him perpetually present as the object and cause of our Pains ! O Hell, O Hell ! avant O gnawing worm, avant O living death, avant death which never dy's, avant life which daily not dying, dy's. Cursed Atheism and Infidelity of the world, thou would'st rather feel these Torments than believe them, wert thou not mad ? Cruel Ambition, thou hast given us the stroke of death. Disastrous Riches, you have forg'd gives which now fetter us. Loves, petty vipers of humane hearts, you ceas'd not to breath and kindle sparks which made these fires for us. Wicked Companies, charming Companies, traitorous Companies, you were the cause of our ruine. O Eternity ! it is then true, that ten Millions of years hence our Evils shall but begin, and always begin without end, never to have an End. O why was not the Womb of our Mothers, that serv'd for the first bed of our Conceptions, the Sepulchre of our births ! O why the Stars, which predominated at our coming into the world, in lieu of their benign Aspects, threw they not darts of Poison against us ! Why did not the Earth swallow us in our Cradles ? Must we live one sole moment, to live Enemies of God eternally ?

Behold ( Christian Reader ) a short description of Hell upon a piece of Paper in writing, but what it is in itself no mortal Man can conceive, though it be as true as the Mouth of God himself.

*And yes thou liv'st, as if no Judgement were to be :*

*And Hell a silly Fable only made to fright thee.*

Alas ! How many millions of Souls are there in the world that labour under this unhappiness, the Devil so procuring and making use of it as a Stratagem to blunt the darts of Heaven,

Heaven, and all incitements to the fear of God, as the Highway to Atheism, and an undoubted note of Damnation? *Sasbold* a most learned and religious Author, upon this occasion cry's out aloud to all Mankind, to endeavour to awaken them from this deadly Sleep, in the following Pathetical discourse, wherewith we will conclude the present point. The Grace of God co-operating, it perhaps may make some impression upon thee.

*O Eternitas ! Quam rarò versaris in mentibus Hominum &c.* O Eternity ! How seldom do'st thou occur to the minds of Men ? I say again, How rarely do'st thou occur to our minds ? O Eternity ! O Eternity ! What shall I say, or How shall I say ? How rarely do'st thou occur to the thoughts of the Sons of *Adam* ? O Eternity ! Who can express what is Eternity ? Who can conceive what is Eternity ? I reckon up in my thoughts a thousand years, I reckon a thousand times thousand years, I reckon as many millions of years as there are grains of sand in the Ocean, as moments in Time from the creation of the world till Dooms-day; and all this while I have not so much as begun to reckon any thing of Eternity. O Eternity ! O Eternity ! Who shall be able to indure the pains of Eternity ? *The smoke of their Torments shall ascend for ever and ever.* What is for ever and ever ? I would say, and cannot say. So long as God shall be God, so long shall their Torments last. And how long shall that be ? It cannot be express'd, it cannot be imagin'd, it cannot be conceiv'd that how long. This one thing we can imagine, express, and conceive, that those Wretches, whom it concerns, are miserable, yea Alas ! too miserable. And it concerns all those without exception, who sin, and do not make satisfaction by penance, while they may ; but they may as long as this present Life lasts ; but this being once ended, there will never be any more May.

*Myne Eyes prevented the Watches : I was troubl'd, and spake not. I thought upon Old days, and the Eternal years I had in mind. Ps. 76. 5.*

*Apoc. 20. 10.*

O King of dreadful majesty! who do'st justly damn, and undeservedly save Souls. Save me, O Fountain of mercy! Remember thyself, sweet Jesus, that I was the cause of that great journey which thou took'st from God to Man, and do not destroy me in that terrible Day, which must decide the Question of my life or death for all Eternity. Take care of my last End, since thou art the cause of my Beginning, and the only cause of all that I am. O Father of bounties! would'st thou stop a Mouth which desires so earnestly to praise and confess thee everlastingly? Alas! O Eternal Sweetness, would'st thou damn a Soul which has cost thee so much sweat and blood, giving it over for ever to those cruel and accursed Powers of darkness? Rather, O Lord, pierce my heart with such a fear of thy Judgements, that I may always dread, and never feel them. If I forget, awake my memory; if I fly from thee, recall me again; if I defer my amendment, stay for me; if I return, do not despise my Soul, but open those arms of Mercy, which thou did'st spread upon the Cross, with such rigorous justice against thyself for satisfaction of my Sins. O Jesus! O Love of eternal Mountains! O Mild Saviour! deliver not a Soul over to this infernal Beast, which will have no Lips, but to praise and confess thee; Eyes, but to behold thee; Feet, but to run after thy commandments; nor Hands, but eternally to serve thee;

*In many words.  
Folly will be  
found. Eccles.  
1.2.*

*With Brevity of speech.* This is the last Instruction, which our Holy Founder gives to the Preachers of his Order; wherein he desires that their Sermons be brief, substantial, and solid; containing in them nothing that is besides their purpose, foreign to the matter they treat of, nothing superfluous, tedious or prolix, to tire their Auditory. Too much Meat cramm'd into the Stomack remains indigested, turns to flegme and corruption, and becomes prejudicial to the Health. The same happens to the Memory, when it is over-charg'd and burden'd with too great variety of Matter; it retains nothing almost, neither has it sufficient leisure to digest what it receives, and turn it into wholesome food for the nourishment of the Soul. For which reason, let our Brethren in Preaching to the people use Brevity of speech. And,

*Because*

*Because our Lord made an Abbreviated word on Earth.]*  
 Rom. 9. 28. His Words were brief, and his Actions were brief. He was brief in his Incarnation to an excess of charity, contracting the Infinity and Immensity of God into the narrow compass of our Humanity; and confining it within the streight bounds of the Virgin-Mothers womb. He was brief in his Manners and Conversation, shunning all majesty, greatness, pomp, riches, pleasures, sovereignty, dominion; and imbracing simplicity, poverty, humility, subjection and obedience. He was brief in his Doctrine, contracting the whole Law of *Moses* and the *Prophets* into this one compendious Precept. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole Heart, with thy whole Soul, and with thy whole Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyself.* And lastly, he was brief in his Death, concluding his innocent Life with the privation of all earthly Goods, and mounting up to Heaven by the strait ladder of the Cross, after a short abode of 33. years among us, took possession of the kingdom of his Father; and so made for our instruction an *Abbreviated word upon Earth.*

O divine Charity, Humility, Poverty, and Obedience! most incomparable Vertues, which have so abbreviated my Lord *Jesus* here on earth, who will give me to enjoy you? O most wise and excellent Master, seeing thy Election is always the most assured, grant I humbly beseech thee, that by thy Example; I may abbreviate and bound myself in every thing during this life, contracting all my Appetites, Inclinations, and Desires into as narrow compass as possibly may be, by debarring them of Riches, Honours, and Pleasures; so to straiten and lessen myself on Earth, that I may enjoy thee in full Proportion in Heaven.

§. IV. We have given you here a compendious draught of the Office and Obligation of Preachers, according to the intention and design of our Holy Founder. It remains we now briefly say something of that of Confessors; which we will do, after we have satisfied the curious Reader, who perhaps

*Our Lord the God of Hosts shall make a Consummation, and Abridgment in the midst of all the Earth. Isai. 10. 23.*

*Matth. 22. 37.*

The Reason  
why our  
Rule makes  
no mention  
of Confessors.

perhaps in this place may put a *Quære* : Why, our Holy Founder makes no expresse mention of Confessors in his Rule, which notwithstanding are so very necessary for the service of the Church, and becoming the Professors of an Apostolical Rule ? To this I answer, that it was not altogether needful, because the Office of Preachers being here expresse'd, that of hearing Confessions is sufficiently understood, these Two being commonly joyn'd together, and by a natural consequence one inferring the other. For Preachers in the vineyard of our Lord, says *S. Antony of Padua*, are such as *sow* the word of God in the hearts of the Faithful, and Confessors are those that *mow* it; now that Husband-man would labour in vain, who should only *sow*, and never *mow*. Behold the reason, why *S. Francis* makes no particular mention of Confessors, thinking sufficiently to have expresse'd their Office in that of Preachers, there being so great an Affinity betwixt one and the other. Which is also the cause, that the Order from its first institution has taken care to unite them together in the same Persons, ever esteeming such as are capable of being Preachers, to be sufficiently qualify'd for hearing Confessions, and both equally agreeing with the profession and calling of *Frier-Minors*. And for the same reason, I likewise here make them near of kin, delivering the same Instructions almost for one as for the other, and applying them to both. Which may very well be done, for what those act in Publick to multitudes in their Pulpits, these may be said to do in Private to particulars in their Confessionals. Wherefore let our Confessors be perswaded that the words of the Rule directed to Preachers here in this Chapter, do likewise belong to them; which they may imagine our Holy Founder to address to them after the following manner.

Instructions  
for Confes-  
sors,

*I also admonish and exhort the said Brethren in the Sermons which they make.]* In the Confessions which they hear.

hear. *That their words be Examined.*] Be well consider'd, ruminated, and squar'd according to the rules of Discretion and Conscience, with due regard to the Seal of Confession; futable and proportion'd to the inclinations, humours, and capacities of their several Penitents: *And Chast.*] Avoiding in this secret Tribunal all impure expressions, smutty phrases, all words of double meaning, all curious and unnecessary questions, repetitions, &c. *To the Profit.*] Helping their Penitents to make solid, sincere, and intire Confessions; remembring themselves to be herein both Judges, Physicians, and Pastors of their Penitents Souls. As Judges, they ought to shew their zeal in the due administration of this Sacrament, to see that Justice be done betwixt God and Man, and an Equality observ'd between the offence and the satisfaction, ordain'd to repair the wrong done to an injur'd God. As Physicians, they are to prescribe proper Remedies for curing their Patients distempers, and injoyn wholesom penances, both Penal and Medicinal, as well thereby to make amends for what is past, as to prevent relapses for the future. As Pastors and Directors of Souls, diligently to instruct them in the Obligations of their state, make known to them the Enormity of their offences, the Necessity of restitution, &c. All which rightly to perform, they themselves must be well vers'd in Cases of conscience, must know how to distinguish betwixt Leper and Leper, Sin and Sin, to understand their different Kinds and Numbers, together with their several Circumstances aggravating or'diminishing notably the malice of the Sin within the same Species; where Restitution is necessary; what Cases are reserv'd; what Excommunications, and Irregularities there are; what are the Impediments of matrimony; to have in a readiness general motives for exciting Contrition, remedies for Temptations, helps against Recidives, &c.

*And*



*And the Edification of the People.*] Which they will not fail likewise to do, if themselves be of exemplar and edifying Conversation; if they give due attendance to their Confessionals, and shew themselves of easy access; if they be pious, just, sober, mild, sweet, even-temper'd, courteous, charitable, disinterested, solicitous in all things for their Penitents good, &c. what comes from such a Confessor cannot but be Edifying. *Denouncing to them Vice and Vertue.*] After the manner declar'd above; neither flattering themselves therein, nor their Penitents: *But every Cause that shall come before them, wheresoever there is question of the Law, of Commandments, of Ceremonies, of Justifications, shew it them, that they sin not against our Lord. Pain and Glory.*] Frighting them with that, Incouraging them with this. *With Brevity of speech.*] Neither using themselves, nor permitting their Penitents to use any discourse in their Confessionals, but what is necessary for explicating their Sins, and laying open the state of their Consciences. For the rest, I would cause to be engraven in letters of Gold over their Confessionals these words: *Take heed what you do, for you exercise not the Judgement of Man, but of God.; and whatsoever you shall judge, it shall redound upon you.*

O most redoubted Judge, and indulgent Father! We yield all possible thanks, and everlasting praises to your Divine Majesty for this so gracious favour bestow'd on Sinful Man, in conferring upon him the Ministry of Reconciliation in this sacred tribunal of Penance. O immense Charity! O incomprehensible Liberality! Whither could your liberal Mercy aspire further? But since it is your heavenly pleasure to make use of a Vassal so vile for so noble an end, vouchsafe graciously to assist him with your abundant grace in the due execution of his Commission, that joyning together your two eminent Attributes, *Justice and Mercy*, he may have regard as well to your Honour, as to his own Profit; so faithfully fulfilling what you promis'd by your Prophet should come to pass in the law of Grace: *Mercy and Truth have met together; Justice and Peace have kiss'd each other.*

2. Paral. 19.  
10.

2. Paral. 19. 6.

Pf. 84. II.

Of

Of Admonishing and Correcting the Brethren.

C H A P. X.

*The Brethren that are Ministers and Servants of the o-  
ther Brethren, let them Visit, and Admonish their Brethren,  
humly and charitably Correct them, not Commanding them  
any thing that is against their Soul, and our Rule. And the  
Brethren that are Subjects, let them remember, that for  
God they have deny'd their own Wills. Wherefore I strict-  
ly command them, that they obey their Ministers in all  
things which they have promis'd our Lord to observe, and  
that are not against their Souls, and our Rule. And where-  
soever the Brethren be, that should know and understand  
that they cannot Spiritually observe the Rule, they ought, and  
may have recourse to their Ministers. And let the Ministers  
receive them charitably and graciously, and use so much Fa-  
miliarity towards them, that they may say and do to them,  
as Lords to their Servants: For so it ought to be, that the  
Ministers be the Servants of all the Brethren. I also admonish  
and exhort in our Lord JESUS-CHRIST the Brethren, that  
they take heed of Pride, Vain-Glory, Envy, Covetousness,  
Care and Sollicitude of this World, of Detraction, and Mar-  
muring. And they that are ignorant of Learning, let them  
not care to learn: But be mindfull, above all things to de-  
sire to have the Spirit of our Lord, and his holy Operation:  
To pray always to God with a pure Heart: To have Humility  
and Patience in persecution and infirmity: And to love*

B bb them

Math. 5. 44.  
Math. 5. 10.  
Math. 10. 22.

them that persecute, reprehend and reprove us, Because our Lord says : Love your Enemies, and pray for them that persecute, and calumniate you. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for Justice, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. And he that perseveres to the end, shall be saved.

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## THE EXPOSITION.

**S. I.** **T**He Brethren that are Ministers and Servants of the other Brethren. ] As Generals, Provincials, Custodes,

*Custodes, &c. Let them Visit, and Admonish their Brethren.]*  
As often as Occasion requires; being oblig'd thereto by the law both of God and Nature. For seeing our Superiours are true Prelates and Pastors of Souls, plac'd in Office, not for their own commodity and profit, but for the benefit and good of their Subjects, they are strictly bound to watch continually over them night and day, to defend and preserve them from all evil, as well external as internal. *Even as the Pastor visiteth his Flock in the day when he shall be in the midst of his Sheep which were scatter'd:* So ought they frequently to visit, inspect and take a view of the lives and actions of the Flock committed to their charge, and inform themselves upon the spot of their behaviour, in order to mend what is Amis, to reform Abuses, punish the Vicious, support, incourage and reward the Vertuous. Such a personal Visit as this, I say, is an indispensable Duty upon all Prelates; injoyn'd likewise by the Council of Trene sess. 25. Chap. 20. And to fail therein through fear, negligence or sloth, according to the common opinion of Divines, is a Mortal Sin. And truly he that performs it not in Time and Place convenient, does not deserve the name of a Pastor, but of a Hireling rather; and may justly fear incurring that terrible Commination denounc'd by Almighty God in the Prophet *Ezechiel* against evil Pastors in the following manner. *Thus saith our Lord God: Wo to the Pastors of Israel, which feed themselves! Are not the Flocks fed of the Pastors? You did eat the Milk, and were cover'd with the Wool, and that which was fat you kill'd; but my Flock you fed not. That which was weak, you strengthn'd not; and that which was sick, you heal'd not; that which was broken, you bound not up; and that which was cast away, you brought not again; and that which was lost, you sought not; but with violence you did rule over them, and with might. And*

Bbbij

*Be thou diligent to know the state of thy Flocks, and look well to thy Herds.*  
*Prov. 27. 23.*  
The great obligation of Superiours.  
*Ezech. 34. 12.*

*Ezech. 34. 20.*

my

*my Sheep were dispers'd, because there was no Pastor; and they came to be devour'd of all the beasts of the field, and were dispers'd. My Flocks have wander'd in all Mountains, and in every high Hill; and upon all the face of the Earth were my Flocks dispers'd, and there was none that sought them, there was none, I say, that sought them. Therefore ye Shepherds hear the word of our Lord: Live I, saith our Lord God . . . . . Behold I myself upon the Shepherds; I will require my Flock at their hand.*

*Humbly, and charitably Correct them. ] Humbly, in words, signs, countenance, gestures: Charitably, with affections full of tenderness, compassion, and brotherly love.*

*Not Commanding them any thing that is against their Soul. ]*

*Our Lord has commanded no Man to do impiously, and he has given no Man space to sin. Eccli. 15. 21.*

*A Frier-Minor not oblig'd to obey his Superiour in things Unlawful, or that are against his Soul and his Rule.*

*2. Reg. 6. 5.*

*1. Reg. 4. 5.*

*The Superiour's own Conscience, with regard to the Commandments of God and his Church. And our Rule. ]* Contrary to any of its Vows, Precepts, Counsels, or Admonitions; either by adulterating them with distorted and forc'd Explications against the true Literal sense of the words, or meaning of the Founder, which thy call a *Gloss*; or by introducing; and imposing upon their Brethren any Statutes, Ordinations, Commands, Dispensations, Privileges, Exemptions, Customs, &c. prejudicial to the purity and sincere observation thereof. For in all such Cases, hold it for a certain Truth what our Holy Founder in expresse terms says in his first Rule. "If any of the Ministers shall command a Brother, any thing that is contrary to our Life and his Soul, the said Brother is not bound to obey him. For that is not Obedience, where any Trespas or Sin is committed. And as for such kind of Superiours, in another place of the said Rule, he gives them this warning. "Let the Ministers and Servants, says he, remember, that the Souls of their Brethren are given them in charge; if through their fault, and bad example any of them shall be lost, at the day of

*Judge-*

„ Judgement they must render an Account before our Lord  
 „ *Jesus*. And therefore carefully see to your own, and to  
 „ your Brethrens Souls; for it is an Horrible thing to fall into  
 „ the hands of a Living God. And these are the 4 principal  
 „ acts or functions of a Pastoral Charge, to wit, to Visit, Ad-  
 „ monish, Correct, and Command; which we will therefore  
 „ here in particular speak distinctly of in the 4 following Para-  
 „ graphs, to afford the more light to the present Text,  
 „ and give you a compleat Notion of the Office of a Superiour.

O my Soul! behold here enough to give a check to thy Am-  
 bitious Spirit. If Superiority be so full of danger, and the neg-  
 lect of it attended by so many terrible Woes, why dost thou  
 run after it with so much eagerness? Rather follow the advice  
 of the Wise Man: *Seek not to be made a Judge, unless thou be able* *Eccli. 7. 6.*  
*by power to break Iniquities; lest perhaps thou fear the face of the*  
*Mighty, and put a scandal to thine equity.* O my God! make me  
 truly Humble, and not take upon me the Charge of other peo-  
 ples Souls, who am so incapable of governing my own. But if  
 at any time by holy Obedience, Superiours shall think fit to put  
 such a burden upon me, grant me, I humbly beseech thee, suffi-  
 cient strength to bear it, and to manage it after such manner, as to  
 make it instrumental to promote thy Honour, and my Brothers  
 everlasting Happiness.

§. II. In the first place then let Superiours Visit their Sub-  
 jects, at the times appointed by the *Statutes*. Generals  
 once in Six years; Commissary-Generals once in Three years;  
 Provincials once every year. To know, if Regular Observance  
 be in vigor and flourish among them: If the Sacraments be  
 duly frequented: If the Divine Office be devoutly and re-  
 verently perform'd: If Meditations, Fasts, Disciplines, Si-  
 lence, &c. be kept up: If the Commandments of God  
 and the Church be observ'd, the Rule and Consti-  
 tutions strictly kept: If no Scandals be committed abroad,  
 no Suspected company of women, no factions, jealousies,  
 divisions

*Stat. Gen. c. 6.  
 p. 1.  
 Thou shalt Visit  
 thy Brethren,  
 if they do well.  
 1. Reg. 17. 18.  
 What things  
 the Prelates  
 of the Order  
 are to inquire  
 into in their  
 Visits.*

The Subjects  
Duty in con-  
curring with  
them.

2. 2. 9. 33. n. 3.

in Reg. fufius  
disp. n. 46.

divisions, animosities among the Brethren to the prejudice of Charity: If the Sick be carefully look'd after: If holy Poverty be observ'd, and the Brethren want nothing futable to their state nor have any thing superfluous: If the Church and Convent be in good repair, the Offices of the House well furnish'd, &c. To which and the like Questions the Brothers must faithfully answer; being under a strict obligation both of Charity and Justice, to concur with the Visiter in helping to mend what is Amiss; this being the end and main design of all Visitations; which cannot be effected but by means of their Information; wherein if they fail, they will certainly be accountable at the last Day, for the dammage Religion shall sustain by their Silence, and for all the Sins that their Brethren shall commit for want of seasonable Correction. For according to *S. Thomas* and other Doctors, every private Religious is oblig'd, even by the Law of Nature, to procure the spiritual Advancement of his Fellow-Brethren, and to contribute to the promoting of the common good of his Order the best manner he is able.

*S. Basil* says, that to conceal the Sin of your Brother to your Superiour, is properly like the advancing the Death of a Sick Person, and the thrusting or casting a Man down from a Precipice, who is about to cast himself into it. For a Sin which is conceal'd, is like an Impostume or Gangrene which daily augments, and at last gets to the Heart, and brings Death along with it. Wherefore as it is to render great service to a Man, to lance or cut the Impostume or Gangrene, what pain soever the Operation should give him; and on the contrary, it would not be the part of a Friend, out of compassion to hinder such an Operation, though never so painful: So, it is not to exercise the Office of a Friend, to hide to your Superiour the fault of your Brother; but on the contrary, it is to contribute to his Death, not to discover his Infirmity

firmity to a Physician that is able to cure it. This Doctrine is *S. Austin's*, where he says : Do not think, that it is any hurt to reveal the Faults of your Brother, there is far more, by letting him perish by your Silence, whom you might have cur'd by the Discovery thereof; for if your Brother had any dangerous Infirmary which he would keep secret, fearing the pain of Incisions, would it not be a great Cruelty in you to say nothing of it, and a great Charity to speak of it? With how far greater reason, ought you then to discover his Spiritual Wound, which he has a mind to hide, which may occasion the Death of his Soul?

*Reg. 3. c. 5.  
Tom. 2.*

The Silence therefore which some keep, out of Honour and Friendship, as they pretend, is a thing quite contrary to the duty and obligation of Charity. They imagine that it is Friendship and a point of Honour, to hide the faults of another from the Superiour, and therefore they have a great repugnance not to do so; because they fear he will upon this account be the less esteem'd; and therefore, as they say, they will not at all meddle or make, in carrying Reports to the Superiour, they desiring to do no body any hurt, or to lessen any one's esteem with his Superiour. This relishes nothing at all of a Religious Spirit. They are Worldly Maximes, and such precautions as these are very dangerous for any one to have in Religion; for it is not to carry Stories about, nor to hurt your Brother, that you discover his Faults; on the contrary, it is to do him good; and not to discover them, is both to do him and Religion a prejudice; in shutting the doors against Visitors, and opening them to Libertines, and thereby undermining all Regular Observance. Where have you learn'd, that not to displease a Particular Person, you may neglect the Fidelity you owe to a whole Body? To whom have you a greater Obligation, to your whole Order, or to a Particular Religious thereof? It is very ill done to hide the



*Ep. 10. ad  
Bonifac.*

*Prov. 28. 23.*

After what  
manner the  
Subject is to  
proceed in  
the dischar-  
ge of this  
Duty.

*Math. 18. 15.*

the Faults of another; it is as if one had intelligence, or were partaker with him that committed them; and it is for this reason, that one ought to be ashamed, of not being Faithful to Religion our Mother in a matter of so great importance. If Men, says *S. Austin*, neglect not to take a great deal of pains, and sometimes even expose themselves to great dangers to cure Beasts, who have no understanding, and from whom they can hope for no thanks; with how far greater reason, ought we to labour for the cure and correction of our Brother, that he may not eternally perish? He is indow'd with Reason, and he may one Day come to be sensible of the greatness of the Favour you have done him. For he who reprehends another, says the Wise-Man, will afterwards be in greater esteem with him, than he who deceives him by flatteries. Wherefore, *S. Basil* in the fore-cited place concludes, Let there be no one that helps to hide the Faults of another, for fear that instead of shewing his Affection to his Brother, he procure his Death. Hide not then the Disease of your Brother, but discover it to the Physician, before it becomes incurable, and he be forc'd to suffer both Fire and the Lance; and this will be to perform the office of a true Friend to your Brother; for by this means you will save him; and had you done otherwise, you would have been the cause of his Perdition.

But the Method of the Subjects proceeding herein must be this. First, to admonish your Brother between him and you, according to the Counsel which our Saviour gives us in the Gospel; *If thy Brother shall offend thee, go, and rebuke him between thee and him alone.* Which is to be understood, if no Inconveniency insue thereby, and that there be Hopes of gaining him that way. If not, then take this opportunity to inform your Superiour in quality of a Father; yet having always regard to your Brothers Reputation as much as possi-

ly

bly you may, declaring no more than Justice and Charity require; for all above that, is pure Defamation. From whence it follows, you must forbear speaking in your Visit of mere Suspicions, of Trifles, of Uncertainties, of Hear-says, of Imaginations, of Sins that cannot be prov'd, of Sins already corrected or amended, or which may easily be remedied by ourselves, or by the local Superiour; likewise of Sins fallen into once or twice out of pure humane Frailty, if there be no publick Scandal, nor danger of Relapse, and such like. And all this you must do without bitterness, grudge, aversion, envy, anger, hatred, revenge, &c. seeking in all you declare, purely and sincerely the honour of God and Religion, and your Brothers good, not his disgrace or confusion.

O my Soul, Angel-Guardian to thy Brother! here render an account of thy Stewardship, see what thou art indebted upon his Score. To God, the essential Verity, thou ow'st *Truth*, in simply and purely declaring what thou assuredly know'st of his conduct: To the Visitor *Obediance*, who requires it of thee: To the Community *Justice*, in maintaining its reputation; and to thy Brother *Charity*, in promoting his good. O Jesus, my Saviour! help me in the discharge of this Dury. Give me true Charity, whereby I may love thee, my Lord God, with my whole heart, with my whole soul, and with my whole strength; and my Neighbour as myself, in procuring as much as I am able his Amendment and sincere Conversion; that so both of us becoming pleasing and acceptable to thy Divine Majesty, we may love and serve thee together world without end.

§. III. The second Part of this Pastoral Charge, is, to Admonish your Brethren, those that are loose and irregular, to stir them up to religious Observance and the practice of Virtue, by often exposing and laying before them the Obligations of their state. For a Superiour is oblig'd by his Office, effectually to procure by all convenient means the spiritual advantage and good of his Subjects Souls, by admonishing,

Ccc

remem-

*I think it meet,  
as long as I am  
in this Taber-  
nacle, to stir  
you up by Ad-  
monition. 2.  
Pet. i. 13.*

Of how great importance it is for Superiours to admonish their Subjects of the very least Faults.

To. 1. Tr. 5.  
o. 2.

remembring, beseeching, exhorting, and other ways proper for exciting them to live up to their Rule and Constitutions, even in the Smallest matters. For though the Subjects in omitting many of them sin only Venially, and perchance sometimes too not Venially; yet the Superiour may offend Mortally, and do a notable injury to Religion, in permitting continually such Abuses, without taking care to remedy them, is the opinion of *Pellizar*, with many others whom he cites. Yea, the Obligation of Superiours in this point is of so very great moment, that thereon intirely depends all Regular Observance, and the failing therein is sufficient to ruine, not only particular Communities, but whole Provinces, as woful Experieence has taught, by the miserable Falls of so many famous Orders, which first began by slight omissions of their Lesser Duties.

Ecdi. 19. 2.  
Ecc. 16. 10.

This Truth is confirm'd by express Texts of Holy Scripture. *He that contemns small things, will by little and little fall into decay. And he who offends in little things, offends also in great ones.* We cannot doubt but that these Sentences come from God; and therefore they ought to suffice to render us extremely careful in the observance of our Lesser Duties, and hinder us from breaking them, under pretence of the small importance of those things they injoy. The Prophet *Jeremy* assures us, that it was from small beginnings, that God came to destroy *Jerusalem*. Our Lord, says he, *propos'd to cast down the walls of the Daughter of Sion, he has taken his measures with his line, and has not ceas'd to endeavour its ruine. All its Out-works are intirely demolish'd, and its walls in like manner cast down.* Behold here after what manner even the strongest Places are taken; and it is according to this method, that our Enemy indeavours to make himself Master of the Fortress of our Soul. The Constitutions and Ordinances of Superiours are the

Bul-

Tbren. 2. 8.

Bul-warks, and serve for a defence to our Rule, which is its chief Wall; so that if you look not well to these Out-works, your Enemy will afterwards undermine your chief Wall, and thereby become Master of your Soul. *He that destroys the Hedge, shall be bitten by the Serpent*, says the Wise-Man. If you begin to destroy this Hedge, this Inclosure of your Rule, if you once come to break it, the old Serpent, which is the Devil, will not fail to enter into your Soul and destroy you. *Why hast thou destroy'd the dry Wall that compass'd thy Vineyard*, says the Prophet speaking to God, *and now all Passengers make their Vintage there?* If you destroy this Wall which incompasses the Vineyard of S. Francis, you can never hope to gather any fruit from it, it will be soon laid waste.

Eccles. 10. 8.

Psal. 79. 13.

But since this is a matter of great Importance, and cannot be render'd too easy to be understood; let us lay aside these Figures and Metaphors, and speak more clearly. Would you know how that is to be understood, which the Holy Ghost says, *He who despises Small things, by little and little will come to fall?* We ought to understand these words in the same sense that Saints and Divines do, who say, that Venial sin, is a disposition to Mortal. Venial sins though never so great in number, can never amount to one Mortal sin, and are not capable of causing Death to a Soul, or of making it lose the Grace of God; but they leave behind them in the Soul, a certain disposition to a slackness in Devotion, and a love to ease and softness; which weakens it, and makes it more easy to be overcome upon the first occasion, and to fall into Mortal sin. After the manner as the first discharge of a Canon, shott against a Wall, which though it do's not cast the Wall down, yet it shakes it so, that it disposes it to be easily cast down, by the discharges that shall afterwards be made against it. And as Drops of water, which first fall

Eccles. 10. 1.

Cecij

upon

Job 14. 19.

De Ord. vit. &  
mor. Inſtit.

upon a Stone, though they are not able to make any impression upon it; yet they dispose it after such sort, that those that follow it, actually make holes in it. *Water makes Stones hollow, says Job, and Floods by little and little carry away the earth.* The contempt and breach of our Lesser Rules are the very same; they are the means that the Devil makes use of to carry us by little and little to worse things, and to make us at last to fall into a Precipice. In the beginning we shall have a very great scruple, for example, to break Silence; but afterwards we shall have less, and lastly we shall come freely to break it without the least remorse of Conscience. The same thing happens also in regard of Meditation, and other Spiritual Exercises; for when once we neglect to make them, another time we make them by halves and very negligently, without gathering any fruit from them, and at last we fall into such a remissness and into so great a negligence of them, that we come quite to lose the gust of Spiritual things. It is from these kinds of beginnings which seem very inconsiderable, that the Mortal falls of Religious Men proceed; which *S. Bernard* takes notice of, when he says, That those who run into disorders and crimes of the highest nature, begin at first by committing Small faults; and no body ever falls or plunges himself at first into an excess of Wickedness. That is to say, that commonly speaking, none ever arrive at first to the highest point of Vice or Vertue, but that *Good and Evil* insinuate themselves by degrees, and grow insensibly in us. It happens in Spiritual, as it falls out in Corporal diseases; both the one and the other increase by little and little. So that when you see a Religious Man commit some great Fault, do not imagine that his Disease then begins, for none ever come to fall on a sudden into any Enormous sin, after they have liv'd innocently and vertuously for a great while; but they begin first by their negligence in those

those Duties which they reckon as Small, and then their Devotion growing cold, it diminishes daily more and more; in so much that at last they deserve that God should withdraw his hand; and when they are no more upheld, they soon yield and fall under the first great Temptation that attacks them.

*Cassian* explicates this Doctrine by another Comparison. Houses, says he, fall not to ruine upon a sudden, but the decay begins at first by some Gutter out of repair and neglected, by which the Rain by degrees rots the Timber that sustains the Building, and in process of time it penetrates the wall, softens the mortar, and at last undermines the very Foundation; so that the whole Building tumbles down, perchance in one Night. *By sloth and want of care*, says the Holy Ghost in *Ecclesiastes*, *the Roof of the house will come to sink, and for want of taking pains to repair it, it will rain through.* Just so it is with us, a certain natural Inclination which we have to evil, first flatters our Senses, and then gets ground, and insinuating itself into our Souls, shakes the firmness of our good Resolutions, and at last so weakens and undermines the whole foundation of our Piety, that all our spiritual Edifice falls down in a moment. A little care and vigilancy might in the beginning easily have prevented the growth of the Evil; but because we neglected it when it was but Small, and did not take care in time to correct such Faults, as appear'd to us but inconsiderable; it comes to pass that this shameful sloth and neglect, is the cause why we suffer ourselves to be overcome by any Temptation which occurs. All which happens by the great wile and craftiness of the Devil, who dares not attack those that serve God, by tempting them in the beginning to omit things that are very Essential, but begins with those that seem to be of Little consequence; and so getting still insensibly some  
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Collat. 6.

Eccles. 10. 18.

advantage, he gains at last his ends, even with more security, than if he had acted otherwise. For if at the first push he should propose and tempt us to a Mortal Sin, he would quickly be discover'd and repuls'd; but by little and little insinuating himself, through Slight omissions and Small faults, he gets into our Souls before we are aware. For which reason, *Past. Admon. L. 3. c. 34.* *S. Gregory* says, That Small faults are in some kind more dangerous than Great ones. Because Great faults, as soon as we think on them, carry such a Horrour along with them, as obliges us to endeavour speedily to get up after we have fallen, and to be very circumspect in avoiding them for the future; but as to Small faults, the less we perceive them, the less we shun them; and making no account of them, we fall so often, that in time we get such a Habit of them, as we seldom or never are able to root them out; in such sort that the Evil which seem'd nothing at first, grows and becomes incurable, through our neglect and frequent relapses.

Wherefore it behoveth us extreamly to stand upon our guard, and to have a special care of the least negligence or contempt of religious Duties, though in never so small concerns or ceremonies; for fear of giving thereby entrance to the Devil, which may occasion us afterwards to fail in the greater and more essential points of our Rule. For so soon as we make no scruple of falling into deliberate imperfections, and of committing Venial sins, we are not far from committing Mortal. *Learn O Jerusalem,* says our Lord by the mouth of his Prophet, *learn for fear my Soul retires from thee, and that I render thee not a Desert and an inhabitable Land.* Learn O Religious Souls, learn how to conform yourselves to the practice of Regular Discipline, and to apply yourselves to an exact observance of your Lesser Duties; for fear that God leaves and abandons you, and that thereby you incur some dangerous Fall. And you likewise © Seniors and

*Jerem. 6. 3.*

The Example  
of qualify'd

and Discreets of Houses, and you O Masters of Schools the Lights of Communities, learn to give good Example, and to carry the Torch of Vertue before Youth. Make appear by your Conduct, that you are extreamly ty'd to the Least Duties of your Profession; and that you have a very great esteem even of the very Least things that regard it. He who distinguishes himself most in this, is he, who most of all edify's others; and the more considerable one is in religion, either for Office, Antiquity or Learning, the more he ought to attend to the Least things, that may be of edification to his Brethren. *Let him who is Greatest amongst you, says the Son of God, become as the Least, and he who Presides, as he who Serves.* It properly belongs to the Ancient and more Learned, to edify and instruct others; it is their Duty to maintain and strengthen religious Discipline, by their Example; and as the Apostle says, *in conforming themselves to those in the most humble and lowest Employments.* For Seniority and Learning in religion, ought chiefly to be subservient to this end; and there is no one so Great, whom the Least office in the service of our great God, do's not become. It is this Example which the Youth of the Order expects from us; they are always desirous that the Seniors should lead the way, who being first in Religion, should likewise be first in the exact Observance of its Rules, thereby to serve as Guides to those, whom the same zeal has engag'd after the self same manner; and when the contrary happens, they are either scandaliz'd at the bad example of the Ancients, or what is worse, follow their steps, and turn Libertines like them. For which we shall render an account to God, and be liable to make satisfaction in the other world, not only for our own faults, but also for the faults of others; as having been the Occasion of them by our bad Example. Learn likewise, O ye Prelates, from this discourse, of how dangerous a consequence it is, daily to tolerate in those

Fathers and Seniors of Houses necessary to maintain religious Discipline in Communities.

*Luc. 22. 26.*

*Rom. 12. 16.*



those under your charge, the Least breach, contempt, omission and irregularity, without seasonably reprovng and admonishing them for the same in your Chapter-houses and other convenient Places. Which, how it is to be done, to the advantage and profit of the Subject, is, what we here in the next place purpose to examine.

The Manner  
of the Superiour's  
admonishing his  
Subjects.

Gal. 6. 1.

The Practice then of this, will be, by fervent Exhortations, full of the love of God and brotherly charity, for a Superiour gently to allure his Subjects to their Duty, and soften their hearts, as it were, with the sweetness of his discourse, according to the advice which *S. Paul* gives to the *Galatians*. *If a Man be found in any fault, you that are Spiritual, instruct such an one in the spirit of Lenity, considering thine own self, lest thou also be Tempted.* In your Reprehensions therefore be mild and gentle. A Superiour ought in all his words, to aim at a happy composition of sweetness and gravity, especially when he reprehends another; otherwise he will lose his labour, and his words will have little or no effect. For as *S. Bonaventure* very well observes, He that discovers the passion of Anger in reprehending, shews that he is more ready to afflict, than charitably to help the Party. Vice can never teach us Vertue, Impatience cannot instruct us how to suffer Patiently, and Pride can never teach Humility; whereas Patience and Mildness would at once both have edify'd and prevail'd upon the Offender, far beyond the best discourse, in which the least Heat appears. Tell a Man, says *S. Ambrose*, his fault, but do not upbraid him; advise him so, that he may perceive his error, without receiving any offence. Which is a very hard matter to do, as the world go's; it being a difficult thing to receive Brotherly Correction patiently, we are so far in love with being well thought of. And this is the cause, why so many resemble those Serpents, which requite them with Poison, who sing  
to

De Inform.  
Novit.

Offic. L. 1. c. 2.

to them pleasant Songs. Whatsoever is spoken to instruct them, makes them passionate, and dart out angry speeches against those, who speak to them mild and gentle words of Truth, and tending to their Salvation. In which, and the like Cases, where there appears little or no hope of Amendment, Prudence directs us not to admonish nor reprove our Brother; according to that of the Wise Man, *Rebuke not the Scorners, lest he Hate thee*: Lest without any fruit we procure his Enmity, and so only gain ill will for our pains. Charity also requires, rather to expect better Opportunity, lest the Offender become worse by our Admonition. But when there is hope of good, every one is bound, especially Superiours to admonish their Subjects, and to put them in mind of their Duty when they see them offend. But to descend to Particulars, and proceed herein with Prudence and Circumspection, Superiours must regulate themselves according to the disposition and quality of the Persons they have to deal with.

*Prov. 9:8.*

1. There are some will better indure a blow, than others a harsh word, or a cold countenance. When Subjects are so very sensible, it is expedient to observe, and in the beginning to touch their Weak Side with hands of Silk and words of *Satin*, to discompose them as little as may be. But if light Admonitions make no impression, we ought to urge, solicit, labour with all the liberty which Authority affords us, and not leave off till we see some hopes of Amendment, according to *S. Paul's* Precept to *Timothy*; *Preach the word, urge in season, out of season, reprove, beseech, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.* 2. When we have to do with those, that are rais'd above the ordinary Rank by their capacity and parts, half a word is enough, and sometimes a Sign, yea the very Example of a Superiour speaks sufficiently, to them, and is a check and silent reprehension.

It ought to be regulated according to the different disposition of the Subject.

*2. Tim. 4:2.*

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tion of their Irregularities. And this way of admonishing our Brother by Example, is much more taking, than that by Words though never so gently manag'd, as having in it something less distastful, and is besides more respectful and generous, which ordinarily charms good Natures.

3. As for Superiours, to do well they should never be reprehended in publick in the face of their Communities, if they are to be continu'd in their Office; because such kind of chiding is a diminishing of their Authority, and gives occasion to their Subjects to despise and undervalue them, to become insolent and proud, and lose Respect towards them.

2 Tim. 5. 1.

4. As for such as are Elders in religion, *S. Paul* again gives a Rule to *Timothy*: *A Seniour*, says he, *rebuke not, but intreat as a Father*. But as for Young Religious, especially the tepid and looser sort, sharp Reproofs are necessary, to check and keep within bounds the fervours and ebullitions of petulant Youth; to whom may be apply'd that of the Wise Man, *Scourges and doctrine are at all times Wisdom*.

Eccle. 12. 6.

5. There must be a difference made between such as fall through Frailty, and Seldom, and those that offend through Malice, and are habituated and harden'd in their Sins. To the former a more mild and gentle way of dealing is to be us'd; but to these a more sharp, severe and resolute.

6. Fraternal-Charity likewise requires, that we have regard to our Brothers Reputation as much as may be, and is consistent with Religion and Justice; *For better is a good Name, than much Riches*. And therefore those Sins that are Private, and do no ways tend to the prejudice of a Community, ought to be privately reprehended. For Man's Reputation, whilst it is untainted and intire, is a strong Bridle against all manner of Evil; as on the contrary, when once it is blasted, there is no more Shamefastness remaining, and the Reins are let loose to all kind of Villany.

Prov. 22. 1.

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For the rest, take care you be not uneven-temper'd, one while harsh, and another while gentle; and by inequality in your Manners thrust all into disorder. That was it, which *S. Gregory* the Great observ'd in Abbot *Urbicus*, saying, That his Monastery was in distemper, because he made himself unequal, one while flattering some, and another while reprehending the rest with immeasurable Anger. Beware likewise of too frequent Reprehensions, and finding of faults in trifles and frivolous matters. There are some Superiours who have a very good Conscience, and whose Manners are rigid, and they not Imprudent; but they have such a desire to frame the whole world to their own Humour, that out of the assiduity of their Admonitions, they render themselves somewhat burthen some to their Inferiours, and authorize the saying of that Ancient, who affirm'd, *An Honest Man was a great Burthen*. There are Natures, like to Caper-Shrubs, which grow worse by too much Manuring, and are much better being left to the goodness of their own Nature. Besides, it is beneath a Superiour and becomes not his Gravity and Wisdom, to take notice of every little passage he hears, or sees; for as the Proverb has it. *The Doctrine of a Man is known by Patience, and his Glory is to over-pass unjust things*. Faults sometimes must be bury'd in silence, if we will preserve peace in a Community; and the seldomer we reprehend, the greater impression our words make, when we speak to the purpose.

Other Cautions to be us'd by Superiours in admonishing their Subjects.

*Prov. 19. 11.*

O Great God ! who accomlishest all thy works with Prudence, grant me, I humbly beseech thee, a competent portion of this most exquisite and necessary Virtue for the discharge of this part of my Duty; that being directed by it, I may know *How*, *When*, and *Where*, to admonish, reprove, beseech, for the good of my Subjects Souls. And since their failing in Smaller Duties is so fatal to Religion, never permit me, through pusillanimity, negligence, or connivance, to tolerate in them any

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irregularity, breach, or omission of the Least thing belonging to thy Divine Service. In fine preserve me from all rashness, inconsideration, incontinency, partiality, anger in my Reprehensions; let my whole Design therein be thy only Honour, and the perfecting of thy holy Love in my Brothers Soul.

Now the Subject ought to receive the admonitions of his Superiour to make profit of them.  
*Prov. 3. 12.*

Thus much of Superiours admonishing; and reprehending their Subjects. It remains we now say something of the Subjects receiving such Reprehensions; and shew them after what manner they ought to take them to turn 'em to a good Account; To wit, with the spirit of *Humility*, and *Charity*. To which purpose we must observe what the Wise Man says, *That the Lord chastizes whom he loves, and takes pleasure in him, as a Father do's in his Son.* Now, as the Chastizements of God are a mark of his Love towards us; so it is a mark of the paternal Love likewise that Superiours bear towards their Subjects, when they reprehend them for their Faults, and advertise them of 'em, that they may correct them. This is it, which causes that Zeal in your Superiour, when he charitably admonishes you of some Fault, which you yourself either do not perceive, or else do not look upon it as a Fault: For hereby he loves you with the love of a Father, who desires nothing more than the Advantage of his Children. Yea, by so doing, he not only lets you see that he loves you as his Son; but is also perswaded of your Affection for him; and that you are likewise perswaded of his, and of the Zeal he has for your good. Nay, even hereby he signifies to you, that he has a good opinion of your Vertue; because if he did not believe, you had sufficient Humility to receive in good part his Admonition, he would have refrain'd from saying any thing to you. On the contrary, when he is not so free with you, but keeps certain measures, and says nothing to you of your Faults, nor of what was told him of you; it is because, either he loves you not

as his Child, or believes you love him not as your Father; or because he thinks you have not sufficient Humility, to make your profit by his Admonitions. And lastly, it is always either want of Love, or want of Esteem, that hinders him from telling you your Faults.

If you wore your Cloke the wrong side outward, or that your Face were dirty, is it not certain, that it would be a great Charity to tell you of it, and you would not only thank him who did so, but on the contrary you would take it ill, if any one saw it, and would not tell you of it? We ought with a great deal more reason, to have the same sentiments in regard of those Faults, which blemish the beauty of our Soul, and which scandalize our Brethren; and it is a great Advantage for us, that there is any one, who has the care with Charity to admonish us of them; because the Love which we bear to ourselves, and which blinds us, is the cause that we perceive not our Faults, or that we know them not to be what they are. As the Tenderness which a Mother has for her Child, makes her believe it beautiful and pretty, though in itself it be ugly and deform'd: So that dangerous Tenderness that we have for ourselves, makes even our Defects to appear to us as good Qualities; and we always set them out in their best Colours. Wherefore *Philosophers* say very well, that a Man is not a good Judge in what regards himself. For if the Law has a suspicion of a Judge, who is a Friend to one of the Parties; how much more ought the Love which we have to ourselves, render us suspect to ourselves in our own Cause? A third Person who is not prevented with any Passion for what touches us, perceives a great deal better our Faults, and is far more capable of judging of them, than we ourselves are.

*Diogenes* said, that we stand in need, either of a good Friend, that will admonish us of our Faults; or of a bad Enemy,

*Diag. Laert.  
l. 8. de Vitijs.*

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my, who will reproach us of them; because the Admonitions of the one, and the Reproaches of the other, may help to correct us. This second Means, is but too much in use in the World, where ordinarily only Hatred and Enmity speak sincerely of others Faults, and where Truth is only to be heard from the mouths of Enemies. But in Religion, it is neither by Hatred nor Jealousy, nor by Malice or ill Will, that they tell us of our Faults; it is only out of Goodness, out of Charity, and out of a desire of our Salvation. It will therefore be our own fault, if we who have them, do not make very great profit by them, having in the person of our Superiour a true and faithful Friend, who charitably admonishes us of our Faults. And without doubt, we ought to believe ourselves happy, when he reprehends us; because without that, we should perhaps never be able to perceive our Faults, nor consequently ever think of correcting them; and so *Dye in our Sins*, as our Saviour said to the *Jews*. For what is it else that a Sick Person deserves, who will not permit himself to be treated, but that he should be forsaken, and let alone to Dye? And what other thing do's that Man also deserve, who will not permit himself to be reprehended, and receives in bad part, all those charitable Admonitions that are given him. *He that hates Correction says the Wise-Man, shall Dye; and he who hates Discipline despises his own Soul.* He deserves without doubt not to be admonish'd nor to be reprehended for any thing, and that his Defects should daily increase, that they come to be known to all the world, and that all the world may divert themselves with them, without any one's having the Charity to speak to him of them. It is this which ordinarily happens to those that find difficulty in being reprehended; and what greater Punishment can such a Man receive, than to be left in his Pride and Obstinacy? *We have taken care of Babylon, and*

*Mat. 8. 24.*

*Prov. 25.  
10, 32.*

*Jerem. 51. 9.*

and she is not cur'd; let us forsake her. He that will not make use of the Remedies that are given him, deserves to be forsaken by the Physician. When we leave off dressing a Vineyard, and prune it no longer, it is because it is abandon'd, as not being able to bring forth any more Grapes; when also we leave off reprehending any Person, who takes it in ill part, it is that we abandon him, as being incapable of Correction. If therefore you desire not to be abandon'd by your Superiour, as a Person sick of an incurable Disease, and as one of an incorrigible Spirit, you must receive in good part whatsoever is said to you, and not attribute that to Aversion or Partiality in him, which is the effect of true Friendship, and of zeal for your Salvation. *It is an excellent thing to be reprehended,* says the Wise-Man, *and to manifest a Sorrow for our Fault.* Because he that takes Reprehension in good part, when he is faulty merits Pardon; and when he is not faulty, he satisfies for other Sins, and merits Reward. And our Holy Father: "Blessed is that Servant, that suffers an accusation, ,, reproof or correction coming from another with as much ,, Patience, as from himself. Blessed is the Servant, that ,, being reprehended gently acquiesces, modestly obeys ,, and submits himself, humbly acknowledges his Fault, ,, and willingly makes Satisfaction. Blessed is the Servant, ,, that is not quick in excusing himself, but with Humility, ,, undergo's both the shame and the blame of a Sin, which ,, he has not committed.

Eccli. 20. 4

Opusc. Tom. I.  
Admonit. l. 22.

O God! how happy are the Heavens that they go always in one measure, and in so great a revolution of Ages do not make one false step? But Man is naturally subject to fall. He is full of imperfections, and if he have any Virtues, he carries them like Dust against the Wind. This is the reason which teaches him that he needs good Advice. And therefore O my Soul, esteem it a great offence to break the Glass which represents thee to thyself; and to think thou shalt commit no more Sins, when

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no body will take the liberty to reprove thee. Rather humble thyself to the Earth from whence thou cam'st, that thou may'st mount up to the throne of Mercy by contempt of thine own Baseness. Alas ! must we be always so far in love with ourselves, that we cannot suffer the remonstrance of a Friend ? How will we then indure the tooth of an Enemy ? What can we love being so partial to ourselves, if we do not love most ugly Darkeness ? O my redoubted Master ! I fear thine eyes, which see those Obscurities, which Self-love takes to be Brightness. If I cannot be always innocent, make me at least acknowledge myself faulty, that I may know myself as I am ; to the end thou may'st know me for an object capable of Pardon.

Commenda-  
ble in Supe-  
riours to  
hearken to  
Advice, and  
to be willing  
to be told of  
their Faults.

I will conclude this Paragraph with one word of Advice to Superiours ; who, as they have right to admonish their Subjects of their Faults ; so likewise it is necessary, that they sometimes should be told of theirs ; which they ought in like manner to receive in good part from their higher Superiours, as also from their Counsellors Assistants or Discreets, who have right to inspect into their Actions ; knowing for assured, that there is no one so wise, perfect and compleat in all respects, who has not his blemishes, imperfections and weaknesses incident to Humane Nature ; against which, there is no better Remedy in the world, than to hearken willingly to Advice. It is that, which the most refin'd States-Men, the bravest Generals, and the most flourishing Monarchs have glory'd in ; attributing thereto the good Success of all their most noble Achievements. That Man (says Campanus Bishop of Terni, in the Book which he compos'd of Magistracy) who thinks to know all, and do all, without having need of the Counsel of others, is necessarily of two things the one, either a God amongst mortals, or a Beast among men. It is look'd upon as a very great defect in Superiours, not to have their Ears open to the Advice that is given them. The Obstinacy which some have, grounded upon a false

false presumption of their own Abilities, which will never forgo what they have once resolv'd on, is very prejudicial to them in the execution of their Office. It resembles a rude Portress, which drives all good Advice from their House. One would not believe the hurt it draws upon all good Counsels; insomuch that it is ordinarily said, that a Man whose Wit and Talents are but small, who notwithstanding knows his own Defects, and will hearken to Counsel, is far more fit for Government, than another who has a greater extent of Wit; but is on the other side so full of Self-conceit, and thinks himself so knowing in all things, that he takes it ill to be admonish'd, or to have Counsel given him. The Holy Scripture is full of passages, that confirm the truth of what I here say. *Have you not seen*, says Salomon, *one who thinks himself a very able Man? There is more to be hop'd from a Fool, than from him. The carriage of a Fool appears very good in his own eyes, but a Wise Man hearkens to Counsel. Where there is a great deal of good Counsel, there Salvation is to be found.* S. James also takes notice, that to be Tractable and let ones self be perswaded, is one of the prime conditions of Wisdom. *Wisdom*, says he, *comes from on high, is in the first place full of Bashfulness, and afterwards it is a friend of Peace, it is Modest, Tractable, and easily carry'd to good. Verily it is a prodigy, that God, who discovers from the superiour vaults of Heaven to the bottom of the Abyss, the least secrets of the world, and who is so clear-sighted that Hell has not darkness thick enough to hide itself before him; notwithstanding All-Wise as he is, to dissolve our Pride, he feigns some Repentance in his actions: But we, whose thoughts are timorous, fore-sights uncertain, actions confus'd, oftentimes have so much Arrogance, as to be desirous to make good our Faults, for fear to confess our Errors.*

Prov. 11. 14.

Prov. 12. 15.

Prov. 26. 12.

Jac. 3. 17.

Jerem. 26. 13.

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He that once in his brain has deified Crocodils and Dragons, not only adores them, but will persuade others that he has reason to set Candles before them, and burn Incense for them. It is a terrible blow, when one is wounded in the head by his proper Judgment, whose ill never rests in the mean. We come to the end of all by the strength of Industry. Stones are pull'd forth from the entrails of Men; the Head is open'd to make smoak issue out; but what hand has ever drawn a false Opinion out of the brain of one presumptuous, but that of God? All seems green, says *Aristotle*, to those, who look on the Water; and all is just and specious to such, as behold themselves in proper Love. Better it were, according to the counsel of the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, to have one foot in Hell with docility of spirit, than an arm in Paradise with our own judgment.

Ah my proud and presumptuous Soul, wise in thine own eyes! How far art thou from solid Wisdom, since thou art destitute of Docility of spirit, one of the most requisite conditions thereof? O that thou could'st always feel the admirable effects of this amiable Virtue! O that thou could'st submit thy Judgment to anothers sentiment, and dispose all thy thoughts, desires, affections, words, and actions according to the counsel of thy Friends and Superiours, advising thee what is most convenient, commendable, and conducing to thy desir'd Happiness! Thou would'st then be able to consult maturely, judge discreetly, and execute virtuously upon all important Occasions. Direct me herein (O divine and essential Wisdom!) and preserve me from all Obstinacy and Presumption of spirit, that I may henceforth be truly prudent, discreet, and well advis'd in all my Enterprises; that so I may in all things more perfectly please thee, the only end and aim of all my Endeavours.

*Then shalt  
Strike him with  
the Rod; and  
deliver his  
Soul from Hell.  
Prov. 23. 14.*

S. IV. The third Part of the Office of a Prelate, is to correct and punish Delinquents. Here he must take care to mix Oil with his Wine, as for the wounded *Samaritan* in the Gospel.

Gospel, that fell among Thieves. These are our Passions; which many times hurry a poor Subject to the extremity of Disorders, if he happen at the same time to be roughly handled by an indiscreet and passionate Superiour. Our Saviour in the Prophet *Isay*, is call'd a Rod, and a Flower; to correct some, and comfort others; but never is he term'd a Sword to kill and destroy. Stormy Spirits are not always the most efficacious. It is not sparkling flames, but invisible heats which melt Metals; and sweetest Influences are those which cause the greatest effects in total Nature. There is some touch of Divinity in mild and gentle Tempers; and God has always been pleas'd that those who nearest approach to him, should be the most Humane. The first Images of the Saviour of the world, were ordinarily painted in the form of a Lamb; and it was likewise a Lamb of God which represented him in great *Constantine's* Font, and which pour'd forth the water in his Baptism; to shew us that the Fountains of his Bounty ran throughout the whole Church. The Holy Ghost has never been seen in the form of an Eagle, or of a Hawk, but of a Dove; to stamp in our manners the impressions of his Bounty. It is an insupportable thing, when there is observ'd (even among those who approach nearest to Altars, and who consecrate the Lamb of God in their hands) some to be of imperious spirits, and wills inflexible, who torment poor Subjects, and make them groan under their Commands. They resemble *Semiramis*, who on her Banners bare a Dove, which in its Beak held a bloody Sword, as meaning to say, That under a Woman's face she had the courage and stern violence of Tyrants. So their Name, their Character, and Degree, testifies nought but mildness; but their Manners are full of rigor and acerbity, which wound Hearts even to blood. They forget their Inferiours are Men who put their precious Liberty, to wit a good inestimable, into their hands as a Pledge;

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Clemency recommended to Superiours in correcting their Subjects.

*Fathers, provoke not your Children to indignation; that they become not discourag'd.*  
Galos. 3. 21.  
*Be not as a Lion in thy House overthrowing them of thy Household, and oppressing them that are Subject to thee.*  
Eccli. 4. 18.

and that they must very skilfully handle them, there being not a creature in all Nature more tender or more sensible, than the King of creatures. They consider not that the Authority of one Man over another, is a thing which is always somewhat suspected by Nature, on what side soever it comes, and that it must be practis'd insensibly, so that the flesh be rather cast into a slumber, than irritated. Power, which is given by God, ought to be manag'd according to his intentions; and as we cannot but see on all sides the effects of his Bounty; so it's not lawful for Man to defile the character of the Divinity with Rigors insupportable.

*Serm. 23. in Cant.*

*Clemency prepares Life.*

*Prov. 11. 19.*

*Mercy and Truth preserve the King, and his Throne is upheld by Clemency. Prov. 20. 28.*

*Self. 13. de Reform. c. 1.*

Hear, if so you please, O Prelates, *S. Bernard's* advice hereupon. Let those Pastors, says he, give ear, who take delight to render themselves formidable to their Flocks. Let them learn to carry themselves towards their Subjects, like Mothers, rather than Masters; study how to be lov'd, rather than fear'd; and if sometimes Correction is to be us'd, let it be Fatherly, not Tyrannical. Show yourselves Mothers in cherishing, and Fathers in chastising. Be mild and gentle; lay aside harshness and cruelty, hold your Arms from striking, shew your Breasts, let your Paps be fill'd with Milk, not swell with Pride. Hear likewise the Holy Council of *Trent*. Let Superiours remember themselves to be Pastors, not Murderers; that they are put in Office, not to lord it over their Subjects, but to tender and love them as their Children and Brethren; that they endeavour by seasonable and wholesome Admonitions and Exhortations to keep them from falling, that they may not be oblig'd to correct them. And if it happen through humane frailty that they trespass, then the Apostle's instruction is to be observ'd, *That they argue, beseech, rebuke in all gentleness and patience*; seeing sweetness works more upon Offenders than rigor, encouraging and heartning of them, than threatening and love than power.

power. But if the' Grievousness of the crime should require the Rod, then Rigor with Gentleness; Judgment with Mercy and with Mildness Severity is to be us'd. Thus far the Holy Council. I conclude with our Holy Founder, who writing to Brother *Elias*, his Vicar-General, counsels him after this manner upon our present subject. " I earnestly recommend  
 „ to you, says he, Charity and Patience in all you do; for  
 „ you have a very great burden upon your shoulders, and  
 „ many to bear with. In the Old Law the High-priest carry'd in his *Rational*, which hung down from his shoulders to his breast, the Names of the 12 Tribes of *Israel*,  
 „ to signify, that a Prelate cannot bear his Subjects well  
 „ upon his Shoulders, if he carry them not in his Breast: For  
 „ we cannot suffer and endure those whom we do not love.  
 „ *Christ* our Lord, when he design'd to commit the care of  
 „ his Church to *S. Peter*, before he deliver'd his Sheep to  
 „ him, examin'd him concerning his Love. Take heed therefore that none of your Brethren transgress, and if they do,  
 „ let them not find Correction without Mercy. Correct then  
 „ (O ye Prelates!) your Subjects when they offend, humbly, mildly, charitably, in the bowels of compassion and tenderness; moderating the rigor of Laws in injoyning Penances, as much as possibly you may, and is consistent with Religion and Justice. It is a saying, *That one had better be accus'd of too much Indulgence, than of too great Rigor.* I find this Maxime suitable and conform to Man's frailty, and to the sweetness of the Evangelical Law, as well as to a Religious State; and therefore to be imbrac'd with both arms by Religious Men, in all matters relating to Penal Laws; in whom it is always far better to lean towards Clemency and Mildness, than to incur the least suspicion of Cruelty.

Care nevertheless must be had, of not falling, through an excess of Clemency, into the opposite extremity of Insensibility.

*Opusc. Tom. 1.  
Ep. 7.*

Puſillanimous and indulgent Superiours ſhow fatal to Communities.

lity, which ſome puſillanimous and ſoft-temper'd Superiours affect to be guilty of; who ſeeking more to pleaſe Men than God, give a kind of Liberty of Conſcience to their irregular Subjects, to do without controll almoſt all they liſt. They connive at their extravagancies, ſooth them up in their follies; and which is worſe, take the chief burdens of Religion off their ſhoulders, to put them upon others more mild, peaceable, and obedient; out of a falſe notion they have, that it is the beſt means to preſerve peace and quietneſs in their Community, and to ſtop the mouths of Libertines, who are always the firſt to inform, and carry complaints to higher Superiours againſt them; which makes them to ſtand in awe, and works them into a baſe compliance. Not conſidering the fatal conſequences of ſuch proceedings; that they thereby moſt ſervilely betray their Truſt, and ſet open the gate to an infinity of Diſorders, for want of humbling thoſe proud idle ones, and keeping them to their Duty, by the means of Correction: Impunity, as *S. Bernard* obſerves, being the Mother of insolence, the Nurſery of crimes, and a moſt pernicious Off-ſpring of a damnable Liberty, which uſhers into Communities all ſorts of Miſchiefs. And *S. Bernardin* aſſures us, there is no Beaſt in a Common-wealth more fierce and cruel, and that is more to be dreaded than it; from whence ſprings the corruption of Juſtice, the breaking of the Peace, the multiplying of great Crimes, and trampling under foot all Laws, humane and divine. That Family is utterly in confuſion, where Correction bears no ſway, ſaid *Petrus Bleſenſis*. Diſcipline is the miſtreſs of Religion, and where Rigor is, there is Vigor. Needs muſt Juſtice hold its place, to maintain Regularity and a Community-life in its luſtre, the foundation of all the happineſs of a Religious State; to cut off rotten members, to reſreſs the insolent, and make honeſt men to live in the ſweetneſs of repoſe.

*De conſid.*  
*Lib. 3.*

*Tom. 2.*  
*Serm. 16.*

*Ep. 132.*

O ye meek and tender-hearted Superiours ! I call you hither. You, whose bowels melt with compassion towards Offenders ; who are endow'd with so much complacency, sweetness and benignity for your libertine Subjects, that you cannot find in your hearts to give ear to the repeated Complaints brought to you against them, and are afraid and even tremble to chastise, or so much as to contristate them ; what will you answer at the last Day to the terrible Judge of the world, to the God of Justice, to whom this your soft Indulgence is as highly provoking, as it is pernicious to your Subjects ? You let them have their Wills in all things. You permit them to lead idle lives, whereby they are expos'd to all sorts of Mischiefs, without taking the least account of their Times spent, or imposing any Task upon them. You let them fall daily into a thousand Irregularities, and multiply Sins without end one upon the back of another, to the scandal of the world, and the loss of your Communities reputation, without shewing any concern or fear of the Judgments of God lighting upon you for such Neglect. As if it were not true what *Agapetus* said to the Emperour *Justinian*, and is approv'd by all the world, That to commit and permit Crimes, when one has full power to hinder them, is as it were one and the same thing. And that of *Philo to Flavins*, Not to chastise, or at least not to hinder Sins, when one may, is evidently to give leave to commit them, yea and even almost to command them. You most cruelly murder, says *S. Gregory*, so many, as you permit out of Negligence or Connivance, of your Subjects Souls to be lost. And therefore that thundering voice of Heaven is directed to you : *Hear ye Kings, and understand, learn ye Judges of the ends of the earth : Give ear ye, that rule Multitudes, and that please yourselves in multitudes of Nations : Because the power is given you of our Lord, and strength by the Highest,*

sap. 6. 2.



*Higbest, who will examine your works, and search your cogitations; because when you were the Ministers of his kingdom, you judg'd not rightly, nor kept the Law of Justice, nor have walk'd according to the will of God. Horribly and quickly will he appear to you; because most severe Judgment shall be done on them, that bear Rule.* This was executed upon the Person of the High-priest *Hely*, severely punish'd by the revengeful hand of God, for negligences committed in the Correction of those under his charge, to serve for a dreadful warning to the Rulers of all ages. For permitting youthful Follies and indiscreet Liberty to his Children, see him become the Object of the most inflam'd anger of the Almighty, which may be imagin'd against one of his Profession. Behold him cast from the High-priesthood as a rotten member, his House everlastingly depriv'd of that honourable Dignity, all his Posterity condemn'd to dye under the scourge of God, and not any one of them ever to attain to Man's estate; another enrich'd with his spoils; his two Sons sensual and voluptuous slain in one day, his Daughter-in-law dead in Child-bed. But above all, through his Sin, the Ark of God taken away by Enemies, and dishonour'd by Infidels; and lastly, himself bury'd under the ruines of his Country, as the last Victim of Gods Justice. All this came upon *Hely*, says the Scripture, *because of his Iniquity, for that he knew that his Sons did wickedly, and had not corrected them.* And you O indulgent, pusillanimous, and negligent Prelates, fear you not the like?

2 Reg. 3. 13.

O Saviour, and Doctor of Mankind! the most exact Model of all Prelates, who by thy Prophet art deservedly stil'd, a *Flower* and a *Rod*, to comfort some, and to correct others. Grant me, I humbly beseech thee, these two divine Qualities for the government of those under my Charge. Give me the *Flower*; natural meekness, benignity, and bowels of mercy towards such as offend

offend thee: Give me likewise the Rod; courage, vigor and zeal in correcting them. To the end, that using either of them with discretion, according to the diversity of Persons, I may thereby effectually promote thy Honour, and procure my Neighbours eternal Salvation.

§. V. The fourth and last Part of the Office of a Superiour is to Command his Subjects, that is, to rule, direct and govern them in the way of Duty, by the help of Precepts and Prohibitions; which, amongst us, is to be done within these two bounds, of the Subject's Soul and his Rule. This is the exact Circumference of a *Frier-Minors* Obedience, to which the power of Commanding ought therefore in a Minoritical Prelate to be proportion'd; these two, to Command and Obey being Correlatives, one necessarily inferring the other, and both exactly of the same dimensions, without any the least addition or diminution; in such sort, that whatever a Superiour may lawfully command, the same is the Subject bound to perform.

Now to help Superiours in the discharge of this part of their Office, and render the practice of it easy and delightful to them, it will not be amiss, if I in this place put the Subject in mind of the advice, which the Apostle *S. Paul* gives him in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, where he says: *Obey your Superiours, and be Subject to them; for they watch continually, being to give account of your Souls; and obey them so, that they may discharge themselves of their Office with joy, not with Sorrow; for that would do you no good.* Here *S. Paul*, sensible of the great charge which Superiours have, do's out of compassion, recommend to Subjects a prompt Obedience to their orders, thereby to render their burthen the lighter. Let us enter into this Consideration with the Apostle, and since those that are in Superiority, have already so great a load upon them, as to render an account to God both of their own and of our actions, let us not add to

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*As you have receiv'd of us how you ought to Walk, and to please God, so also do you Walk, that you may abound more. For you know what Precepts I have given you by our Lord Jesus.*  
1. Thesl. 4. 1.

One principal means to render the Office of a Superiour easy, is the Subject's ready Obedience.  
*Heb. 13. 17.*

their load, by any stubbornness or reluctance to their orders, A Superiour is certainly to be pitied, when he meets with difficult Persons, whom he cannot deal with as he pleases, nor command them as he judges convenient; but on the contrary, has his thoughts continually upon the rack, whether his Command will be welcome, or what reasons and difficulties they will alledge for a Dispensation; and lastly how he must manage his Orders, so as to make them agreeable to the humours of his Subjects. There is as much trouble in governing these kind of Persons, as there is in making use of a lame Leg or Arm. For the pain even of removing a lame Leg is sometimes so intense, that we cannot advance one step, though never so much to our advantage; and the pain of the Arm is now and then so sharp, that we cannot so much as lift up our hand to our mouth to feed ourselves. The reason is; because both Parts are very ill, so that you cannot help yourself by them without pain. The Comparison holds in an indocile Religious Man, who is a Member of that Order to which God has call'd him; for the whole Order, like the Church, is only one Body. Now if there be one Member of this Order indispos'd, or stubborn and intractable, his Superiours can never employ him, without feeling pain themselves, though they have never so much need of his Service. For when a Superiour sees that a Subject obeys with reluctance and discontent, he is so sensibly troubled at it, that he dares not command this lame Member, though the business be never so pressing, and though great inconveniences follow upon its being neglected. A Superiour that is brought to these straits, would rather choose to do every thing himself, if it were possible, than Command any thing; and for this reason he cannot but always groan under his burthen of Superiority. Nor do's his only trouble proceed from hence; his Tenderness likewise and Love which

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he bears towards his Subjects, is a great Affliction to him; for being a Father, he cannot choose but grieve, to perceive these failings in his Children. It touches him to the quick, to see how little they are in love with Vertue and Mortification; to see their reluctancy in accepting of such humble Offices, as they should be ready to embrace upon all occasions; whereas now, when ever they are offer'd them, they immediately reply, repine, excuse themselves, and find some inconveniency or other in the thing Commanded. *Thomas à Kempis* says, that a luke-warm Religious, is always Sick and Indispos'd, to what he do's not like; and never wants his pretences to be dispens'd with, in what he has no mind to perform. We are always faulty in respect of such things, as we do not desire; but when they are according to our Wish, though never so painful, they must be done. Which occasion'd this excellent saying of *S. Chrysostom*; The force of our Will must needs be very great, which gives us power to Act when we will, and takes it away when we will not. *Serm. de Zach.*

It is easy then from hence to gather how much Superiours suffer, when their Subjects think their Commands hard, and shew their unwillingness in obeying them. There is no Pain so sensible to them as this, nor any Mortification so great, as when their Subjects are thus indispos'd in their Souls. Obey them therefore, willingly, readily, submissively, do not give them this Affliction, hinder them from groaning under their burden: For after all, *This will do you no good*. Consider that this indocile humour of yours, can never turn to any Account; that you will be the first that will suffer by it, as all People of the same stubborn disposition have found to their cost; that you will one day groan under the burthen, as well as your Superiour; and that if you continue thus, your Life will be very uneasy. Consider that you will be look'd upon as a Sick Member, and as one unfit for any use; which certainly will not conduce

to your Salvation. Lastly, consider that your Superiours, out of a condescendency to your humour, will let you do what you please; so that instead of doing God's will, you'll do your own; than which nothing is more pernicious, nor is more to be dreaded by a Religious Person; for it is the opinion of all Saints, that into the hands of a more cruel Executioner you cannot be deliver'd, than that of your own Will.

O divine Obedience! that all Religious would embrace thee with open arms and bended knees, in rendring themselves pliant and submissive to the Commands of their Superiours! How much more justly, discreetly, and easily would Religious Houses be govern'd, to the satisfaction of their Prelates, to the edification of the People, and to the honour of the Catholick Church? Infuse it (O suprem Commandeer of all Creatures!) into the hearts of thy Children, whom thou hast been pleas'd to call to a Religious State. Drive out from amongst them all replies, reluctancies, murmurings, mutinies, rebellions; that Obeying their Pastors, thou (O most glorious Lord God!) may'st be perfectly pleas'd with them all in this world, and eternally prais'd by them in the world to come.

The power of Commanding is to be prudently manag'd.

Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Oracul. 19.

Here note, Though this power of Commanding in our Superiours be of so large extent, as having no other limits than what our *Soul* and our *Rule* do prescribe; yet to do well, it ought not to be made use of but with much circumspection, and very sparingly. Because Precepts, multiply'd upon the back of one another, either are in danger of being forgotten, or of being contemn'd, or else render their Author odious, or the Subject disobedient. For which cause our *Holy Father* advises Prelates, "Not to lay commands under Obedience, but seldom, nor to shoot that Dart first, which ought to be the last. We must not hastily put our hand to the Sword. But he that stands not in aw of a Sword, and the Subject that executes not readily the command of Obedience, unless he has some very good reason for it, neither fears God, not

„ nor regards Men. Wherefore let not a Prelate be rash in imposing Precepts. For what else is the Power of commanding in a temerarious Ruler, but a Sword in the hand of a Mad-man? And what is more desperate, than one that slights and contemns Obedience? And therefore take it for a general rule, To be always careful how you Command another, in those things you yourself find difficulty to Obey; and not to order by way of Injoyning, what you can have done with Desiring. By this means, you will avoid many disturbances in your Community, will gain the esteem and affection of your Brethren, maintain your authority, and find few discontented and disobedient Subjects, which is the glory and happiness of a Superiour. Behold what belongs to the 4 Parts of the Office of a Prelate.

Such a mild Government as I have here describ'd, our holy Founder very much approves of, as futable to the holy Gospel, and the Spirit of his Order, wherein Superiours and Inferiours are all Little ones and Brethren together, and which himself excellently well declares in one of his Works. I will give you his own words, for a further Proof of all I have said, wherewith to conclude this present subject. 'I desire, „ says he, that my Brethren the Provincial Ministers, shew „ themselves affable to their Little ones under their charge, „ and that they be indow'd with so much sweetness and benevolence towards them, that their Brethren, when they „ trespass, be not afraid to trust themselves in their hands. „ I would have them circumspect and moderate in laying „ their Commands, and easy in pardoning those that transgress them; making it their Glory to bear rather with Sinners, than to correct them. Let them shew themselves „ Enemies to Vice, but Physicians to the Vicious. In fine, „ I would have them such, that their lives and conversations „ be a perpetual Monitory to their Subjects, and a Mirrour wherein

What Qualities our Holy Father requires in the Prelates of his Order.

*Opusc. Tom, 3.  
Collas. 27.*

wherein to read their Duty, and see their Imperfections. Superiours that govern after this manner, I esteem them worthy of immortal praise, and everlasting rewards.

O Sovereign Bishop, and Pastor of Souls I Vouchsafe, we humbly beseech thee, to make all the Prelates of our Order truly such. Effectually inspire them, that they may fulfill with great exactness and fidelity all that which is here requir'd in these four Parts of their Charge; that when thou com'st to Judgment, thou may'st find their Provinces and Convents duly visited, their Subjects charitably admonish'd, the Good encourag'd, the Evil corrected and amended; and the careful Pastors themselves full of Merits, wherewith to purchase a crown of Glory, and together with their Flocks, everlastingly to enjoy thee in thy celestial Kingdom.

So much for the Duty of a Superiour, we come now to examine that of the Subject.

S. VI. *And the Brethren that are Subjects, let them remember, that for God they have deny'd their own Wills,* ] A wholesome Remembrance; which in the first place, reduces into our thoughts, the strict Obligation we are under, of never recalling what we have done in our sacred Profession. For when thou shalt vow a Vow to the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee. And therefore it is a great misfortune for those that resume their own Wills, after they have renounc'd them with so much solemnity and pomp, and made a free Offering of them to Almighty God at the foot of the Altar; rendering themselves thereby guilty, both of Perjury and Theft. This is the Malediction (whereof the Prophet Zachary speaks) that go's forth upon the face of the whole Earth. For every Thief, as is there written, shall be judged; and every Swearer by it in like manner shall be judged. I will bring it forth, says the Lord of Hosts: And it shall come to the House of the Thief, and to the House of

*If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.*

*Math. 16. 24.*

*Deut. 23. 21.*

*Disobedience in a Religious Man is both Perjury and Theft.*

*Zach. 5. 3.*

of him that swears by my Name falsely : And it shall abide in the midst of his House, and shall consume it, and the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof. Now, who is that Man that swears falsely by the name of God, but he that makes a Vow to his Creator and performs it not ? And who is a Thief, but he that takes away a Thing which is none of his own ? Such is our Will, after our Profession. For thou hast given thyself therein, says *S. Bonaventure*, to a Master for God, and for the Kingdom of Heaven ; and now thou art no longer thine own, but his, to whom thou hast sold thyself ; and therefore it is not lawful for thee to dispose of thyself, without his Will, who is thy Lord. And if thou do'st, what may'st thou expect at the hands of him who says : *I am the Lord, that loves Judgment, and hates Robbery in a Holocaust*, but that everlasting Curse, that go's forth upon the face of the earth, and will one day consume all the timber and stones of thy Habitation, and utterly destroy thee both Body and Soul ? Wherefore let us take care, my dear Brethren, how we trespass against our vow of Obedience ; how we question at any time, sift, examine, call in doubt, seek excuses, murmur against, slowly, tepidly, perfunctoriously execute, or make demurrs upon any the least Command of our Superiour.

*Inst. Novit.**p. 1. c. 2.**Isa. 61. 3.*

O my God ! I absolutely renounce all Disobedience. I will no more have mine own Will, which both is, and has prov'd so unfaithful. I resign my self wholly into the hands of my Superiour, whose careful Eye warches over me, and will render an Account to thee for me. And I yield thee most humble thanks, O most Sweet Lord ! for the heroical Example thou hast been pleas'd to give me of Obedience to thy Heavenly Father, and to thy Parents here on earth. O that I had the like strong, intire, punctual, prompt, perseverant, and loving Obedience to my Superiours ! I humbly beg it of thee, by this thy most holy Obedience. Command me by them, what ever it pleases thee, so thou give me virtue to accomplish what they Command.



An Obedient  
Man shall  
speak Victory.  
Prov. 21. 28.  
The sweet  
fruits of Sub-  
jection and  
Obedience.

§. VII. *And the Brethren that are Subjects, let them remember, that for God they have deny'd their own Wills.*] Again a wholesome Remembrance; which brings into our thoughts, the innumerable Blessings we reap by being Subjects. This happy State puts us into possession of a thousand Advantages, whereof Superiours that command over others are for the most part depriv'd. First, it affords us the conveniency of divine contemplation and familiarity with God in Prayer, which is an Exercise so sweet, so delicious and charming, that there is nothing like to it in all the entertainments and occupations of universal Nature. The Oil of consolation, said *Hugo*, dries up in worldly Vessels, but as for the consolation and joy which is drawn from Devotion, it is so exuberant, that there is no Vessel here below able to contain it. It is necessary the Heart break into sighs, and dissolve into desires for the presence of God. I call your Consciences, O devout Souls, to witness, that I were Eloquent, if I could make pass through my Pen, what you feel in your Hearts. As there is no corporal Riches comparable to Health, so there is not any spiritual Wealth in the world, that comes near the Alacrity which God distills into a Heart truly and solidly Devout, freely unloos'd from Earth, to be resign'd to Heaven. Is it not here, that an intire Reconciliation is made with our Master, that the Stole, the Ring, and Shoes of *Hyacinth* are put on to walk with alacrity in the paths of his Commandments? Is not here the Rock, where so many little Currs, which cease not to bark in the bottom of a Soul engag'd in affairs and businesses of the World, are appeas'd, and where the Mind becomes a calm Sea, beautified and curl'd with the rays of an enamour'd and smiling Sun? If there be nothing so majestic, so delightful, so pleasing, as the contemplation of Truth, whereon our Soul lives, as the Eye on colours, the Bee on dew, and the Phoenix

as is said, on the thinnest vapours of the Air; is it not here, where after so many errors, so many fancies, so many illusions, which turmoil'd our Spirits in the exercise of our Charges, we enjoy in purity and plenitude the consideration of the most noble Maximes of a Spiritual Life? O a thousand times happy Soul, which having chas'd away all these illusions of Vanity and Ambition, beholdest in a sweet solitude and delicious repose of a Private Life with a clear eye the ever to be adored rays of this Verity!

Besides this, the most blessed state of a Subject affords us many other Advantages, which Religious men ought to make very great reckoning of. It furnishes us with daily matter for exercising the two prime vertues of our Profession, to wit, Humility and Obedience, the fruits whereof are innumerable. It makes us more vigilant and exact in all our duties of Religion, by being constantly under the eye of our Superiour. It is an assured Bulwark and strong defence against the assaults of Vain-glory, Pride, Ambition, Anger, Impatience, Flattery, Trouble, Anxiety, Discontent, &c. to all which Superiours are expos'd, which feed upon their very marrow, and put them night and day upon a most cruel rack. It makes us amiable to our Brethren, and friends to all the world; placing us out of the reach of Envy, Detraction, Hatred, Murmures, and the mortifying Censures of others, to which Superiours are liable. It happily frees us from that dreadful Account, which those that Command, must give at the last Day of other Peoples sins, as well as of their own; of so many Scandals committed abroad, so many Irregularities introduc'd at home, so many Abuses tolerated, so many Transgressions against the Rule and Constitutions unpunish'd, so many pusillanimous Condescensions to the importunate and unlawful petitions of tepid and loose Brethren. Which made *S. Gregory* the great to say: That Superiours add other

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*Hom. ix. in  
Ezech.*

Peoples deaths to increase their own misfortunes; because they murder so many, as they permit, out of negligence or connivance, of their Subjects souls to be lost. O wretched Superiority! as if thou wert not miserable enough of thy self, thou wilt espouse other Mens sins, and make them thine own, to render thyself still more miserable.

In fine, to be a Subject and live under Obedience, is the shortest way to Perfection, and the securest path to Heaven. "Obedience, says *S. Francis*, is the work of Faith; „ the proof of Hope, the mark of Charity, the mother of Humility, and nurse of the Peace of God which exceeds all „ pleasure and delight. And again, "I esteem, says he, the „ fruit of Obedience so great, so copious and abundant, „ that those who submit their necks to its yoke, no time, „ hour or moment passes idly with them, and without some „ profit. *Ruffinus* says, That Obedience is the safe-guard of all the Faithful, and the mother of all Vertues. It found out Paradise, it opens the Heavens, and lifts up man from the Earth. Its abode is with Angels. It is the food of Saints, with which they are wean'd, and by which they are brought to Perfection. And *S. John Climachus*, The man that is subject and lives under the Command of another, lives without fear of Death, and makes no more of it than of a Dream; being fully assur'd, that at his last hour an Account will be requir'd of his Superiour, and not of him. The same Saint also calls living under Obedience, the making of a Voyage a sleep, and the securest way of Sailing. For as a Passenger in a good Ship commanded by an able Sea-man, has nothing to trouble his head withal, but may sleep securely, because the Commander is careful and vigilant; so a Religious man that lives under the yoke of Obedience, goes to Heaven sleeping, that is, by totally depending upon the conduct of his Superiour, who is his Pilot, and no less careful

*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Orat. 20.*

*Orat. 27.*

*Vit. SS. PP.*  
*Lib. 3.*

*Grat. 4.*

ful and vigilant than the other. And surely it is no little happiness, to be carry'd in the arms of another, as an Infant in the arms of its Nurse, through all the difficulties and storms of this Life; which is a favour that God vouchsafes to all those, who live under Obedience. It is the Superiour that is charg'd with all, and who bears the Burthen; Subjects need not concern themselves, whether this or that be fittest to be done, they have nothing else to do but to live in repose, and rely upon their Superiour, who is their Guide, continually watches, and will answer for them. As long as you comply with Obedience, if any thing be Amiss, God takes it off from your Account, and places it upon your Superiours. And for this reason *S. Hierom* speaking of the advantages of religious Obedience, breaks out into these words: O sovereign Liberty! O happy and holy Security! which almost places us in the blessed State of sinning no more.

*Reg. Monach.  
cap. 6.*

But this is not all, our Superiours do not confine their charity to the Soul alone, they go further, and extend their care to the Body also; so that a Religious man that is Subject, needs not trouble himself for Temporals, his Superiour provides both diet, lodging and cloathing for him, to the end he may employ himself more freely in the service of God; which is so considerable an Advantage, that as *Cassian* recounts, it engag'd the Abbot *John*, after twenty years Solitude, to put himself once more under the Obedience of a Superiour. This holy Man having liv'd in a Monastery thirty years, retir'd himself into the Desert according to the practice of those Days; where he liv'd 20 years, so much favour'd with divine Consolation, and so absorpt in Contemplation, that he seem'd almost to have lost the use of his Senses, and frequently forgot to give his Body some small refreshment. Yet neither these extraordinary Favours which God did him, nor all the sweet Raptures of a solitary con-

*Collas. 9. c. 12.*

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templative Life could divert him, after twenty years spent in them, from resolving to return to his Monastery, and to live in Community as he had done before, under the yoke of Obedience. He told his motive in these words; Though, says he, Contemplation has more advantages in Solitude, than in a Monastery, yet I find this inequality recompens'd by the happiness we find in a Monastery, of not being solicitous for to *Morrow*. And indeed to be freed from all care of Temporals, as particularly those Religious be that are Subjects, must needs bring much peace and quiet along with it.

These are some Considerations among others, which may serve to render us contented with the low and humble condition of a Subject; yea joyful of so happy a lot, a thousand times to be prefer'd before all the Dignities and Offices of the Order. And may likewise be of advantage and comfort to those Superiours, who are sometimes depos'd of their Charges undeservedly, and reduc'd to the same Equality with the rest of their Brethren. These may consider besides, that it is more honourable to have Merit without an Office, than an Office without Merit; and that we came to religion to Obey, not to Command. Which is the reason, that in the form of our Profession, mention is made of that, but none of this; so that if we afterward come to Command over others, it is besides our purpose and expectation, and as it were foreign to our calling and state of Life. And therefore if we are put upon the same Level with our Brethren, it is what we design'd when we first came amongst them.

O divine Obedience! O happy Subjection! which art so agreeable to the High and Mighty God, and from whence are deriv'd so great advantages to Mankind; O I who will give me to love and embrace thee with my whole heart, to imitate him, who of a King of infinite Majesty, made himself a Subject for  
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my sake? O most sweet *Jesus*, who so greatly lovedst Obedience, Simplicity, and littleness of Spirit, that for it thou likewise took'st the littleness of Body, making thy self Little for the love of us, thereby giving us an example to shun all Greatness, and to make ourselves Little by humility. Grant, dear Lord, I may make myself truly Little in imitation of thee, and rest satisfy'd with the low condition of a Subject; that being made partaker of the Littleness which thou choosedst in this life, I may come to partake of thy Greatness in the other, world without end.

§. VIII. *And the Brethren that are Subjects, let them remember, that for God they have deny'd their own Wills.*]

Once more a wholesome Remembrance; which recalls into our minds the Object and principal Motive of our Obedience. Which verily is no other than God himself, whose will, and not Man's, we properly fulfil when we exercise an act of religious Obedience: As on the contrary, when we are disobedient to our Superiour, we do not therein so much disobey Man, as God, who looks upon this Disobedience, and resents it in the same manner, as if done immediately to his own Person. This truth we have deliver'd to us in several places of Holy Scripture. When the *Israelites* were in the Desert of *Sinai*, the fear to die of Hunger, made them repent their Departure from *Egypt*, and caus'd them to grumble against *Moses* and *Aaron*, who had brought them from thence by God's orders: *Moses* and *Aaron* thereupon told the Children of *Israel*; *We have heard your Murmuring against the Lord; for who are we, that you murmure against us? Know ye not that your Murmuring is against God himself, not us?* When the same People rejected *Samuel* out of a desire to have a King, like other Nations, God told *Samuel*: *They have cast me off, not you, and are unwilling I should rule over them.* And in this Sense are likewise understood these words of the Prophet *Isaiah*: *Do you think it nothing to trouble Men, that you are also*

*He that despises these things, despises not Men, but God: who also has given his Holy Spirit in us.*  
1. Thess. 4. 8.  
God the Object and principal Motive of a Religious Man's Obedience.

Exod. 16. 7.

1. Reg. 8. 7.

Isai. 7. 13.

*thus troublesome to my God?* Do you think it a small matter to oppose those Men, whom God has appointed to govern you? Know, that it is a hainous Crime; for it is God that you resist, it is God to whom you give the Affront. This made the Saviour of the world to say in the Gospel: *He that hears you, hears me; and he that despises you, despises me: But he that despises me, despises him that sent me.* S. Paul likewise confirms this important Verity in several of his Epistles; but particularly in that which he wrote to the *Ephesians*, where he thus addresse himself to Servants.

*Servants obey your Masters with Fear and Respect, and with Simplicity of heart, as you would obey Jesus-Christ himself.* If S. Paul ordains, says S. Basil upon this place, Obedience to be paid to higher Powers upon earth, after the same manner as to Jesus-Christ himself, and even to those also who remain'd in Sin and Infidelity; with how much more reason ought Religious men to obey their Supriour as such, who desires nothing more of them than to fulfil the will of God? And therefore S. Paul subjoyns in the same Chapter, *You must not serve them only when their Eyes are upon you, as if it were barely to please them; but like Servants of Jesus-Christ, do the will of God, by serving them readily, and cheerfully, as if it were Christ, and not Men that you waited upon.* We are not to look upon the person of our Superiour that commands us, as Man, but as God; for we are not come to Religion to serve Man, but God. Nor do we live with Men but with God, since our Life is crucify'd with Jesus-Christ. *All that you do,* says the same Apostle in another Epistle, *do it with a good will, as if it were done for Christ not Men, being assur'd that he will reward you for it.* All the holy Fathers are of the same opinion. And this Doctrine was so generally receiv'd among the ancient Fathers of the Desert, that they look'd upon the command of their Superiour, to be

Luc. 10. 16.

Eph. 6. 5.

Coloss. 3. 23.

be the command of God himself. Which consideration is expressly recommended by our blessed Saviour in these words; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit upon the chair of Moyses, observe and do all they shall say to you*; as God's Representatives and Vice gerents, considering them not as Men, but as God, whose place they hold.

*Matth. 23. 2.*

§. IX. This consideration of Gods being the Motive and prime Object of a Religious man's Obedience, and that his Superiour is God Almighty's Vicar, Deputy or Vicegerent, is well worthy to be ponder'd by us, and whereof we ought to make a very great Account; it furnishing us with several advantageous Means for rendering more easy and familiar to us the practice of this Vertue; which otherwise is absolutely the most difficult of any whatsoever in a Religious State. Which made *S. Gregory* the great to say, That it was not altogether so hard for a Man to leave what he *has*, but it was very hard for him to leave what he *is*. And therefore it was necessary here to make use of some powerful Engine to move our Will to an act so contrary to Man's Inclination, and the inborn notions of proper Judgment, as is that of Obedience.

How beneficial this Consideration is to Religious Persons.

*Hom. 32. in Evang.*

The first Advantage then we draw from this consideration of obeying God in our Superiour, is, that it gives us force, as also a strong hope of Success in the performance of what is commanded us; God Almighty never imposing Impossibilities, but always helping us to the execution of his Orders, by the assistance of his divine Grace. In Religion we stand in need of this encouragement, which a Confidence in God brings along with it, upon the account of several difficulties we meet with all. And therefore nothing can be of greater advantage to us, than to consider that it is God that commands us, that it is God that has put us into this or that Employment, and that he will infallibly give us such strength,



strength, as shall be necessary to acquit ourselves well of it.

Pf. 4. 9.  
Pf. 22. 1.

Besides, how great is the peace and quiet he enjoys, who sees God in the person of his Superiour, and looks upon himself as in the hands of God, who, he is confident, will take care of him? He can say with the Prophet: *In this hope will I sleep, and rest in peace. It is God that takes care of me, I shall want for nothing.* I am in very good hands, and it is certain that nothing can happen to me, which God would not have happen, and which he do's not design for my good.

Again, by obeying God in our Superiour, we live in a continual submission and resignation to his divine Will; which is another of its benefits, and an admirable help to entertain ourselves with a constant and uninterrupted Love of God, and in continual Prayer. For the producing incessantly acts of Conformity to the will of God, and the fixing of our contentment and satisfaction in doing it, must needs be a very profitable way of Praying, and an excellent means of living constantly in God's presence.

Moreover, he who sees God in his Superiour, never troubles himself at the Person that is set over him, be he good or bad, young or old, wise or imprudent, illiterate or learned, noble or ignoble, a friend or an enemy. He knows not how to distinguish betwixt one and the other of all these, he only there beholds God, and rests assur'd that by how much the more contemptible the Person is that Commands, so much the more glorious and praise-worthy is he that Obeys. Much less is he troubl'd at What is commanded him; for he is only, and always intent upon doing the will of God. All his time is taken up in this; this is the *Manna* he lives upon, and in this alone he places all his joy and satisfaction, what ever the Thing be that is enjoyn'd him; difficult or easy, base or honourable.

Finally

Finally, this beholding God in our Superiour, is the cause that we entertain a more favourable Opinion of our Superiour, interpret all his Actions in the best sense, and are excited thereby to a just esteem, respect and veneration of his Person. For otherwise if you consider nothing but the bare Man in your Superiour, you will find no more in him than in yourself, since you are no less a Man than he. And though he be never so Learned, Prudent, or Holy, you will still say he is but a Man, and that his knowledge do's not equally extend to all things, he may very well mistake in some one thing or other. This Consideration will carry you on to think, that like other Men he has his by-ways and particular inclinations, and that he do's not look upon you with so favourable an eye, as upon some other Religious. But above all, if he commands you what is hard, painful and contrary to your desires, Self-love that is always extreamly ingenious, will most certainly furnish you with a thousand Arguments to oppose him; and thus you will live uneasy, upon the account that you cannot intirely submit your Will and Judgment to his. For as long as you think that his Reasons are only Humane, you will never want other Reasons to oppose against them, especially if they are not favourable, and do not make for you. On the other side, if you do not look upon your Superiour as a Man subject to errour, but really consider the person of *Christ* in him, who is sovereign Wisdom, Goodness and Charity, and who can neither deceive others nor be deceiv'd himself, then all your Arguments and Reasons are silenc'd, since Heavens Orders admit of no Reply. Therefore the Royal Prophet said, *I was dumb and open'd not my mouth; because thou didst it.* How ready, how perfect would our Obedience be, were we but thus dispos'd? We should no sooner hear the Superiour's voice, but obey it with the same promptitude, as

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if *Christ* spoke to us himself. Though we had begun to form a letter, we should leave it in the same posture, and think we committed a great fault by the least delay in Obedience. How attentive, how careful should we be to comply with his commands, by making his Will ours? In a word, there would be no difficulty which this Consideration alone, would not make easy to us. Let us then, my dear Brethren, upon this Motive obey our Superiours, in all things without exception; let us do nothing from morning to night which is not exactly squar'd by this rule; let us do it cheerfully, readily, blindly, sincerely; let us say, what our holy Founder did, "I will firmly obey the General Minister of this Fraternity, and that Guardian which he shall please to set over me; into whose hands I will give myself intirely up without reserve, and make myself his close Prisonner, so as not to be able to stir, or go, or do any the least thing without his leave. And I will fear, love, and honour him, for he is my Lord; being God's Representative and Vice-gerent, appointed and set over me by God himself.

*Test. S. P.*

O Sun of Justice! that mov'dst, and stay'dst thyself at the voice and beck of two only persons, *Mary* and *Joseph*, to whom for my sake thou didst make thyself Subject. Grant, that I may intirely submit myself to thy Delegates here on earth, delighting to deny mine own Will, to accomplish theirs; assuring myself, that in executing the Commands of my Superiours, I do execute thine, and in being disobedient to them, that I do disobey thee,

*Philip. 2, 8.*

§. X. *Wherefore I strictly command them, that they obey their Ministers* ] Their respective Superiours. In Imitation of him, who humb'd himself, made Obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. For the which thing, God also has exalted him, and has given him a Name which is above all Names; that at the Name of *Jesus* every knee may bow and every tongue confesse, that our Lord *Jesus-Christ* is in  
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*the glory of God the Father. In all things which they have promis'd our Lord to observe.* ] In all things expressly contain'd in their Rule, to which by Vow or Promise made to God they have bound themselves to perform. Which is very reasonable, and no less feasible. For if those who live in the world, from the highest to the lowest, do renounce their own Wills, and subject them to that of another; and this for a small interest of Honour or Profit, as we daily experience, they regulate their eating and their sleeping to the appetite and sleep of others, and they are so conform'd to anothers Will, as to take a pleasure in this sort of life, and to have gain'd a custom which makes it more easy and agreeable; why should not we, who are Religious Men, and act purely for the Love of God, perform that for God's sake, which they do for a poor consideration of Glory and Profit? Why should we not as readily obey our Ministers in things relating to our Soul, as they do in those appertaining to the Body? Yea, and take a pleasure and delight in a sort of life so regulated as is this of Religion, and make our Will that of the Superiour, which is better than ours can possibly be; when Persons of the world conform themselves so intirely to the irregular practices of others, and make it their Happiness to comply with them, by changing day into night and night into day, and by undergoing a thousand other inconveniences? *And nevertheless they do this only to obtain a Temporal reward; when on the contrary, we hope for an Eternal and permanent one.*

It is then by virtue of this Promise made to our Lord, that Superiours have full power and authority to impose Precepts upon us, and that we reciprocally are under an indispensable obligation of obeying their Commands, in every thing that is not evidently Sinful, or against our Conscience and our Rule. It is the Covenant we made upon the day of our

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Profession.

The Reasonableness of this Command.

1. Cor. 9. 25.

A Covenant between Religious Persons and their Order.

Profession. When we enter'd into Religion, there pass'd a Contract between us and the Order, by which, the Order is bound to provide us with all Necessaries futable to our State, to educate, instruct, inform, and afford us all convenient helps for serving God, saving our Souls, and arriving at eternal Happines: And we on the other side, upon that Condition, oblig'd ourselves firmly to follow its directions, to permit ourselves to be rul'd by it, commanded and dispos'd of both Body and Soul, according as Superiours shall think fit. No one is exempted from this Obligation, though never so ancient in the Order, never so learned, noble, deserving. Every body that has embark'd himself upon this *Minoritical* Vessel, must steer his course, direct all his pretensions, purposes, actions, intentions, designs to this Pole-star, this Sea-needle of Obedience; and must be govern'd by his immediate Superiour, exactly and readily performing, without the least reply or reasoning the case, all that shall be appointed him, (as one in a dangerous Storm is bound to follow the directions of his Pilot) if he desires to avoid Ship-wrack, and pass over with safety the perillous Ocean of this Life, to arrive at the hop'd for Haven of everlasting Happines. Wherefore let us not think much, *to obey our Ministers in all things which we have promis'd our Lord to observe.* Let us make a firm resolution with ourselves to change our Will intirely into that of our Superiour; and by doing this, besides the Reward we shall have for it in the other World, we shall also live in Religion to our perfect satisfaction, joy and contentment. For it is in this alone, wherein all the facility and difficulty of a Religious Life consists; and whereon all the contentment or uneasiness of those who have embrac'd this State, depends. If you are resolv'd to quit your own Will to take upon you that of your Superiour, you will find all things easy and pleasant in Religion, and you will

will live in peace and contentment of Mind; but if you retain any Will contrary to that of your Master, you will never go on in that State without difficulty and vexation, and in-dangering your Salvation.

It will much enlighten this, and the following Text, if we here distinguish three kinds of Obedience; one of Necessity, another of Perfection, and a third of Charity. Obedience of *Necessity* is that, which is contain'd within the limits of its Rule, or which extends itself only to such things as a Religious person has oblig'd himself expressly by his Vow, Rule or State of life. Of which *S. Bernard* is to be understood, when he says: Let my Prelate forbid me nothing of those things which I have promis'd, neither let him exact of me any thing that I have not promis'd; let him neither augment or diminish my Vow, without necessity, and my free consent. And this sort of Obedience, which is common to all Religious, is express'd here by these words of the present Text; *That they obey their Ministers in all things which they have promis'd to our Lord to observe*; To wit, all that are express'd and specified in the Rule.

Obedience of *Perfection* goes further, and regards every thing that belongs to Evangelical perfection; in such sort, that whatsoever a Superiour commands that conduces towards acquiring the same, though not included formally and expressly in any particular Vow, Institute or Rule, yet it readily submits to and imbraces it. And this kind of Obedience is peculiar to *Frier Minors*, signify'd by the following Text; *And that are not against their Soul, and our Rule*. That which nothing can be more Sublime; and therefore it is call'd *Transcendental*, because flying above all Commands, and without reserving any the least thing, it Obeys in all that is possible, good, and lawful. It has no Law, says *S. Bernard*, it is not limited by any bounds, nor satisfy'd

Three kinds  
of Obedien-  
ce.  
1. Of Necess-  
sity.

*De Precept. &  
Dispen. c. 8.*

2. Of Perfec-  
tion.

*Ibid. c. 9.*

with.

## 3. Of Charity.

with the narrowness of its Profession, but with a noble and generous resolution mounts to the very top of Charity, ready to execute all that shall be enjoyn'd it with a cheerful and willing mind, and being without measure it tends to an infinity. Lastly, Obedience of *Charity* is, when Equals obey Equals, or a Superiour his Subjects, after the example of our Saviour, who being Lord and Master appear'd in the midst of his Disciples in the quality of Minister and Servant; out of pure Charity condescending to their weaknesses, and conversing familiarly with them, in eating, drinking, discoursing, washing their feet, &c. And of this kind of Obedience it is that our holy Founder speaks in his first Rule, where he says: "Let them readily, and with a good will, serve one another in the spirit of Charity; which is the true, and holy Obedience of our Lord *Jesus-Christ*, by which he obey'd Temporal Powers here on earth, and his own Parents according to the flesh, so much inferiour to him. This being observ'd, the following Text will be easily understood.

Reg. 1. c. 9.  
By Charity of  
Spirit serve  
one another.  
Gal. 5. 13.

*And that are not against their Soul, and our Rule.]*  
With regard to the Subject, explicated after the same manner as above, with relation to the Superiour. Here our holy Founder, says *Hugo of Dina*, with great fervour of spirit, enjoyns all his Brethren, that they obey their Ministers, not only in those things which they have promis'd to our Lord to observe; but moreover in all such as are not contrary to their Soul and our Rule; acknowledging no other bounds than these two. Whence we infer, that a *Frier-Minor* is oblig'd under Mortal sin, in a matter sufficiently weighty, and imputed to him as such, to obey his Superiours, not only when they command him what is expressly contain'd in his Rule, or conduces to the observation thereof: But also, when they command any thing, that is either *above*, or *beside*

Hugo Reg.  
c. 10.

The vast extent of a Frier-Minors Obedience.

*beside* what is there formally or virtually express'd; so the Thing commanded be feasible, religious, and profitable in some kind or other, for avoiding Evil or procuring any necessary Good, either to the Order in general, or to some Religious in particular. And this without excepting even so much as the Liberties of the Rule, or the interior Acts of the Subjects will, as the Intention of applying the Sacrifice of the *Mass*, &c. All which Superiours have power to impose upon their Subjects, when they shall judge them convenient or conducing to the fore-said ends. The reason hereof is; because none of these things, in the cases suppos'd, can be properly said to be against either our Soul, or our Rule; which notwithstanding are the only Limits here prescrib'd for our Obedience; but rather on the contray, they are according to both. But, if on the other side, Superiours should command things that are manifestly contrary to the Subjects Conscience or Rule, ( in Doubtful the Subject must stand to the Prelate's Judgment ) or that are impertinent, unprofitable, or morally speaking surpassing his force, then the Subject, as we said before, is not bound to Obey him, the Superiour having no right to Command; because in such cases, *God must be obey'd, rather than Men*. For the rest, the higher Prelates can limit the power of lower Superiours in order to this precept of Obedience, and the *Pope* of all. In fine, That, according to the 4 Masters, is against our *Soul*, not only which in itself is Sinful, but likewise that which moves, provokes, induces to, or is the occasion of Sin: And against our *Rule*, is all that which is against its Vows, Precepts, Counsels, and its Accessories, towit the Statutes of the Order, as well General as Provincial, made for the purer observation thereof.

From what has been said upon these two Texts, the Reader will easily see how sublime and universal the Obedience  
of.



of *Frier-Minors* is, which verily is the most perfect and of the largest extent of any religious Obedience whatsoever in God Almighty's Church. And it was fitting it should be such, since *Frier-Minors*, as our holy Founder assures us, are therefore expressly given by God to the Church, "That  
 „ both by word and deed they may be Witnesses and Followers of *Christ's* most excellent and most perfect Obedience, by which he was made obedient for our sakes, not  
 „ only to his Heavenly Father even to the death of the Cross,  
 „ and to his Parents the most Blessed Virgin his Mother  
 „ and *S. Joseph* his Foster-Father; but, (which is much more)  
 „ he would be obedient likewise and subject himself to  
 „ wicked Princes and Priests, and taught us to obey them  
 „ when he gave Tribute to *Cesar*, and commanded us to do  
 „ the same when he said of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.  
 „ *Whatsoever they command you, do ye, but do not their works*.  
 „ Because by how much the more contemptible the Person  
 „ is that Commands, so much the more pleasing and meritorious is the Obedience of him that is Subject. And the  
 „ most perfect and Evangelical degree and way of obeying,  
 „ is to obey these and other such like Superiours for God's  
 „ sake, not only in the things which we have promis'd in  
 „ our Rule to observe, but likewise in all others whatsoever  
 „ that are not against our Soul and our Rule, without any  
 „ limitation, restriction, or modification of the obedience,  
 „ power and jurisdiction of our lawful Prelates. Thus our  
 „ Holy Founder,

O most sweet *Jesus*! who didst descend from Heaven, to do, not thine own will, but the will of thy Father. Assist me with thy Grace, that in all things whatsoever without exception, that are not repugnant to thy holy Law, nor to my Rule, I may perfectly renounce and mortify mine own will, to subject the same to the will of my Superiour, as I faithfully promis'd thee on the solemn day of my Profession. For I know, dear

Lord,

*Opusc. dub.  
 Append. Cur  
 FF. MM.  
 dati sunt Ecclesia.*

*Matth. 23. 3.*

Lord, *Nothing so much displeases thee, as a foolish and faithless Promise, and that better it were I should not Vow, than that I should Vow and not pay thee.*

*Eccles. 9. 4.*

What remains to be taken notice of concerning the Subject's Obedience, is, that to be Perfect and Intire, it must have three conditions, or degrees. For we are not only to obey in the Exterior, that is, in barely doing what is Commanded us ( which is the first degree of Obedience ) : But we must also obey Interiorly, by making the Superiour's Will our own ; and this conformity of our Will, is the second degree of Obedience : But yet it is not sufficient, we must advance still further, and conform our Judgement likewise to our Superiours, making his Sentiment ours, and believing all to be good and just which he Commands; in which consists the third degree of Obedience. In a word, when our Exterior Action, our Will, and our Judgement do all three agree, and are equally conform with what is Commanded, then is a Religious man's Obedience Perfect and Intire ; which will never be, so long as any one of these three conditions are wanting.

Three Degrees of Obedience.

As to the first degree, A great diligence and exactness is requir'd in the performance of the thing which Obedience prescribes ; in such manner, that when the Clock strikes, or the Superiour commands, we must be as ready to Obey as if *Jesus Christ* himself call'd upon us, and at that very instant give over what ever it is we are doing. After the example of the Ancient Fathers, whose Obedience *Cassian* so much commends; who speaking of what they did, says, they were continually employ'd, one with writing Books, another with translating them, another meditating, others were busy at Manual labours. And they no sooner heard the Clock Strike, or the Superiour's call, but they even strove who should

1. Degree.

*De Instit. Regul. 4. c. 12.*

be the first out of his Cell; and their haste was so great, that he who was Writing, would not allow himself time to finish the Letter of a word he had begun; preferring Obedience before all Duties whatsoever, even Spiritual Reading, Prayer, Meditation, and other exercises of Piety. Of such an Obedient man *S. Bernard* says: He do's not know what it is to delay, and put off the business Commanded him till to morrow, he is an Enemy to all kind of Demurs, he prevents his Superiour in imposing Obedience, and even gets the start of his Command. His Eyes and Ears are still open to the least Sign given him; all his other Senses and every Part of him, faithfully wait the motion of his Superiour. He do's what he is bidden, go's where he is commanded, and is always ready to receive and execute every order of Obedience.

*Serm. de Obed.*

2. Degree.

The second degree of Obedience, we said, consists in an intire conformity of our Will to our Superiours, by really making his Will ours. And this is what no Religious Person can be ignorant of, since they are all receiv'd upon this condition. At their first coming this is propos'd to them, and laid down as the first great *Principle* they are to act by. And when they are bid to consider, that they are come to Religion, not to do their own, but anothers Will; they never fail to answer, that they know this very well. Thus they are sincerely told their Obligation before hand; which is altogether necessary. For 'tis most certain, that it is Obedience which makes a Religious Man; and therefore *S. John Climachus* calls Religion, the Tomb of our Will, wherein it lies dead, and in which a provocation to Humility lives; because the very moment we ingage ourselves in a Religious State, our Will ought to dy to Ourselves, and by Obedience live only to our Superiours. Hence it follows, that those who wish for such Commands from their Superiour, as they like themselves, who use little Arts to make

*Quod. 4.*

make him condescend to their Will, and who love to do nothing but where they find a Satisfaction, are very ill dispos'd in order to Obedience, or rather have no Obedience at all. They must be ask'd, like the Blind man in the Gospel: *What would'st thou have me do to thee?* The Superiour must continually employ his thoughts in finding out what every one will soonest Obey in, and accommodate himself to every man's particular Humour: Whereas on the contrary, they ought to know his Will, and prevent it by Obedience, since they are come to Religion, not to the end the Superiour should conform and submit to their desires; but rather to live in an humble Submission of mind, ready to perform the Superiour's Will, without which there is neither Obedience nor Religion. He, says *S. Bernard*, that either openly or covertly indeavours to have his Superiour Command him, what he has a Mind to himself, is much deceiv'd, if he pretend any Merit due to such Obedience; for in this case he do's not obey his Superiour, but his Superiour obeys him.

Luc. 18. 41.

Serm. de 3.  
Ord. Eccles.

The third degree of Obedience, consists in a conformity of our Judgement to our Superiours; in such sort, that as our Will must be one with his, in like manner our Judgement also ought to be the same. So that we ought to look upon all his Commands as reasonable and just, and submit our Understanding to his, as to the square and rule of our actions; for without this obedience of the Understanding and submission of our Judgement, the Will, which is a blind Faculty, can never perfectly or long Obey, nor perform a Command with that exactness, which Obedience requires. This Doctrine agrees with the opinion of Holy Men, who term Obedience a perfect *Holocaust*, in which the whole Man, by the hands of those whom God has put in Authority, is entirely offer'd up to him in the fire of Charity. We find this difference in the Old Law, betwixt a Holocaust and other

3. Degree.

Sacrifices : In a Sacrifice, one part of the Victim, was burnt to God's honour, and another part was kept for the use of the Priests and such as serv'd in the Temple; but in a Holocaust, the whole Victim was burnt, and totally consum'd without any reserve. In like manner, your Obedience can never be a Holocaust, unless you submit your Understanding as well as your Will; nor can it be Intire and Perfect, as long as you fail to sacrifice your Judgement, which is one of the noblest Powers of your Soul. This made *S. Ignatius* to say, that those who submit their Will, but not their Judgement to Superiours orders, have only one foot in Religion.

„ Perfect Obedience is that, says our Holy Founder, when  
 „ a Religious man omits to do what seems to him most prudent and best advis'd, and embraces that which he judges  
 „ less convenient, more inconsiderate, and worse contriv'd,  
 „ purely to fulfill the Command of his Superiour. Wherein  
 „ he performs an action very meritorious and pleasing to God,  
 „ bidding adieu to his own Judgement and Opinion to follow another Body's. He that obeys his Prelate in this manner, yields submission to his Creatour, and to his Neighbour affords matter of great edification. It is the most commendable Obedience of all, where Flesh and Blood have no share  
 „ in what we do. *S. Hierom* writing to a Religious Man, concerning his conduct in Religion, recommends this submission of Mind very particularly to him : Do not concern yourself, says he, by judging of the Orders which your Superiours give out, nor in examining the reason why they lay such Commands upon you; it is your duty to obey and execute their Orders, as *Moses* declares, *Hear Israel and be Silent*. *S. Basil* proposes to Religious Men the same as an Apprentice, whilst he learns his Trade under his Master, as a Pattern of their Obedience. He has his eyes continually upon his Master, he obeys him in every thing without contradic-

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Serm. 5.*

*Ep. ad Rust.  
Monach.*

ting, without interposing his Judgement, or without ever inquiring the reason of this or that Command, and by thus doing, in a little time he becomes a Master himself. *Pythagoras's* Scholars had so much Submission for him, that his bare Authority was so convincing a Reason to them, that all Controversy was silenc'd by an He said it, *Ipsè dixit*. How much Respect and Deference then ought Religious Men to have for their Superiour, who is far above *Pythagoras* and holds the place of *Christ*? Ought they not in all questions and doubts of Obedience, to think they have a sufficient reason to submit their Judgements, and believe what ever is Commanded them, is holy, just, and most convenient for them, where the contrary do's not evidently appear? The bare consideration of the Superiour's Command, ought to be the only Motive why they obey, accompany'd with a pure and holy Simplicity of heart; concluding their Superiour's Command to be conformable to the Law of God and their Rule in all things, where there appears no Sin. And this is properly what we call Blind Obedience, which the Saints so constantly recommend to us, and have left behind them so many great examples thereof in their own Practice. And which our holy Father incomparably well expresses by the example of a Man depriv'd of his Corporal Eyes. "I have often seen, says he, a certain Blind Man, who had no other Guide of his way but a little Dog. This little Dog he follow'd whither, soever it led him; he walk'd according to its direction, without inquiring or reasoning the case with it upon this or that Way. If it went before through stony and craggy paths, he follow'd it; if by plain and smooth ways, or through the streets, he accompany'd it; if it carry'd him to Church, he pray'd; if to Peoples houses, he begg'd Alms: So that he conform'd himself so, and did all according to the instinct of this little Animal, and was

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Exempl. 2.*

...  
...  
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no

Nowhere without its motion and conduct. Such ought to be  
 „ ( continues our holy Father ) a true and perfect Obe-  
 „ dient man. To obey well he must be Blind, and shut his  
 „ Eyes in submission to his Prelates orders ; he neither  
 „ can, nor will decide or determine any thing of his own  
 „ Judgement, but with submission and readiness fulfil what  
 „ is injoynd him ; wheresoever his Superiour's will and plea-  
 „ sure leads him, he follows ; if the thing commanded him  
 „ be smooth and easy, he embraces it ; if craggy and  
 „ difficult, for the love of Obedience he cheerfully contemns  
 „ and makes light of it. In a word, a true Obedient man  
 „ considers in all things, not the Difficulty, nor the Reason  
 „ or Motive of the Command, but the Authority of the  
 „ Commander, and the Merit of Obedience.

O blessed Redeemer ! we render thee all possible thanks for the singular Example thou hast given us of this Heroick Obedience, offering thyself a most pure and perfect *Holocaust* on the wood of the Cross, to accomplish the will of thy Heavenly Father for our Redemption. Grant us, we beseech thee, these three conditions of perfect Obedience, in imitation of thine ; a conformity of Judgement, a conformity of will, and a conformity of Actions with all the Commands of our Superiours ; without which, our Obedience cannot be pleasing and acceptable to thee, nor meritorious for us to Life Everlasting.

Come ye to me  
 all that labour,  
 and are bur-  
 den'd, and I  
 will refresh  
 you. *Math. 11.*  
 28.

§. XI: *And wheresoever the Brethren be, that should know and understand.* ] Plainly, manifestly, assuredly. *That they cannot spiritually observe the Rule.* ] Without sinning, or evident danger of sinning against the Purity and Perfection thereof, as well in what relates to its Counsels and Admonitions, as to its Vows and Precepts: By reason of certain Impediments, or violent Temptations, arising from the Place, or from Things, or Persons that are in the Place, Convent, or Province, which they themselves are not able to master, remove and

and overcome. *They ought.*] Bound by this Precept. *And may.*] Without fear, or danger of being hinder'd by any. *Have Recourse to their Ministers.*] Their Superiours, to crave their help for removing or remedying the said difficulties, whether Interior or Exterior. It is the Advice which *S. Bernard* gives, when he says : If the wicked and irreligious Behaviour of those with whom you dwell, hinder you from doing your Duty, and living up to the prescripts of your Institute, I counsel you to follow the liberty of the Spirit, and to go to another Place more commodious, where a man may render his Vows to God, which his lips have distinguish'd; for verily with a holy Person you will become holy, and with a deprav'd and naughty one you shall be perverted.

*De Prac. &  
Disp.*

Not that the Brethren are oblig'd hereby to a Personal Recourse; seeing it is abundantly sufficient, to obtain the end of the Precept, to do it, either by Letter, or some other convenient way, as Superiours shall appoint. For Superiours may prescribe the fashion or manner, how this Recourse is to be made, though they cannot hinder it; unless it should proceed in the Party from his own fault, for example with a design to shake off the yoke of Obedience, or from curiosity, impatience, pusillanimity, levity, ignorance, inconstancy, or some other vicious Motive or Cause. Neither are the Brethren oblig'd to recur to their Ministers or higher Superiours, if the Local or immediate Superiour can take away the Occasion; or they themselves, but will not, out of negligence or malice: In which and the like Cases their Superiour is not oblig'd to hear them.

Note.

*And let the Ministers receive them.*] Bound thereto by the Natural and Divine Law, as well as their Rule. *Graciously.*] Courteously, both in speech and countenance. *And Charitably.*] With a heart full of tenderness and

*If thou hast a faithful Servant, let him be to thee as thy Soul: As*

com-



a Brother so  
treat him.  
Eccli. 33. 31.

Pf. 103. 18.

2. Reg. 6. 6.

Collat. 26.

Have they  
made thee a  
Ruler? Be not  
extoll'd : Be  
among them as  
one of them.  
Eccli. 32. 1.  
Who is Weak,  
and I am not  
Weak? 2. Cor.  
11. 29.

Affability in  
Superiours  
winsethe good  
will of their  
Subjects.

compassion, as towards their Spiritual Brethren, afflicted and disconsolate, and such as are greatly solicitous for the observation of their Rule, the discharge of their Duty, and salvation of their Souls; they also being sent to them expressly by the suggestion of the Spirit of God, and of our holy Founder, for comfort and relief, as poor *Porcupines* laden with prickles and acerbities, to whom they must be a Sanctuary and Rock of refuge, *Petra refugium Herinaceis*. And therefore let it please Superiours to hearken to the Advice which our holy Founder gives them elsewhere, in these words : " Let the Minister take care to provide for them, in the same manner as Himself would wish to be provided for, if he were in the like Case. And again in another place : " Let the Prelate, says he, mercifully comfort his afflicted Brethren, for fear lest receiving no Remedy for their Distempers at his hands, they come to despair of their Cure. And use so much Familiarity towards them. ] In Words and Actions. That they may say and do to them. ] That their Subjects, encourag'd thereby, may freely and confidently lay open their Grievances. As Lords to their Servants. ] Without any fear or awe of them. For so it ought to be, that the Ministers be Servants to all the Brethren. ] Servants in taking their Requests, lending an ear to their Complaints, stretching out affectionately to them their helpful Hands, and strengthening their Arm against those that oppress them ; Servants in labouring for them, in watching over them, in taking care of their Affairs, promoting their Interest, bearing their Burdens, providing them Necessaries, &c.

§. XII. O Prelates, there is nothing that renders you more amiable and dear to your Subjects, than these works of Charity, and namely this their easy and familiar Access to you. It is your humble, sweet, and benign Condescension to their reasonable and religious Petitions of this kind, that charms

charms them. It is that which gains their hearts and affections, which lays up there in store for you Treasures of love, reverence and esteem, and which makes them obedient and ready to execute with cheerfulness your most difficult Commands; yea, even to sacrifice their Lives, if occasion were for the safety of your Persons; which your Authority alone though never so great, would not be able to effect. In fine, it is that which likens you to your meek Redeemer, the Lamb of God, the Master of prelates, and Model of all perfection. Behold him in the midst of his beloved Apostles, his dear Brethren, sweetly, gently, mildly conversing with them; every where equalizing himself, and tempering the awful rays of his Divinity, so the more to encourage their familiarity and confidence in him. For otherwise how should those poor fishermen, those Idiots and Ignoramus's, those men of Nothing have presum'd to approach the Son of God, the Lord of sciences, and King of the universe, with so much freedom, as they were commonly seen to do, discoursing familiarly with him, proposing their doubts, making known their necessities, &c. as freely and confidently, as a little Child would do to a tender and loving Father.

From all which, are very far those proud Superiours, that let themselves be approach'd no more than burning Mountains; belching forth fire and flames on all sides; who with disdain and contempt repel their Subjects, howsoever reasonable and just their Requests are; and treat them as importunate Vagabonds, that come to rob them of their Rest, hinder their Recreations; and interrupt their Studies; repaying all time lost, that is spent in giving Audience to their afflicted Brethren, who in their distress have recourse to them, as to their Physicians, Pastors, and Fathers for comfort and relief. They presently fall into passion, when these begin to expose their Grievances; and instead of affording them some

On the contrary Pride, Arrogance and Harshness render them odious.

reasonable satisfaction, dart forth angry speeches, and repute for Trifles what ly's most heavy upon them : So much is the Brain of these proud ones turn'd, and become giddy by looking too much from on high. But, Wo be to them ! there is a terrible Judgement attends such Superiours, who receive not their Subjects with sweetness, when they address themselves to them in their Temptations and Weaknesses ; but reject or check them, and shew not the bowels of a Father towards them ; nor Absent, vouchsafe so much as to answer their Letters. For if any one come to grow worse by their Harshness or Silence, as it often happens, and thereby come to perish, God will require an account of his Soul at their hands. *The wicked man shall dye in his iniquity, says our Lord : But I will require of thee an account of his Blood.* Wherefore, my Brethren, if any one falls into any Defect, ye that are Spiritual, instruct him with the spirit of sweetness, each one making reflexion upon himself, lest he himself comes also to be tempted. Let Affability and Cheerfulness of countenance appear in your conversation and discourse ; for if you be cloudy, dull, heavy, sour, and carry yourself with Severity, your Subjects will be terrified with your looks, and will assuredly avoid your Presence. And what then is to be expected of such, but that they become a Prey ready for the Wolf to devour, seeing the Pastor has frightened them away. They are certainly the Cords of Adam, wherewith Men must be drawn, whom Gentleness allures, and Harshness drives from us. For which cause endeavour to be mild and courteous towards all your Subjects ; especially those that are under Affliction. Let your Reprehensions in any case be gentle, and mollified with the spirit of Lenity ; and very great heed taken, lest any Sourness in your behaviour make your Conversation ungrateful, troublesom, and odious to them.

O God of Mercy, and Father of all Consolation ! which hast  
the...

the heart of a Mother, admirably to comfort the calamities of so many miserable Mortals. Impart, we humbly beseech thee, to the Prelates of our Order, this sweet, benign and gentle Spirit; to the end, they may open their Ears and Hearts with an amorous compassion towards their poor afflicted Subjects; and laying aside all pride, impatience, anger, arrogance, and hard heartedness, may patiently receive the complaints of all such as have Recourse to them, redress their grievances, resolve their doubts, remedy their scruples, and in all things extend to them their helpful hands in the bowels of true fraternal Charity.

§. XIII. *I also admonish and exhort the Brethren in our Lord Jesus-Christ, that they take heed of Pride, Vain-Glory, Envy, Covetousness, Care and Sollicitude of this world, of Detraction, and Murmuring.* Our Holy Founder had great reason here to give us this Caution, and fervently to exhort us in the name of God to beware of these Vices; they being greatly prejudicial, not only to Religious in general, but in a particular manner to *Frier-Minors*; shaking even the very Foundation of our *Seraphical Order*: As being directly contrary, either to our Humility or the low and humble-state of life whereof we make profession, as *Pride* and *Vain-glory*; or to our strict Poverty, as *Covetousness* and the *Sollicitude of this world*; or else to the Affection justly due to our spiritual Brethren, whom according to our Rule we ought to love and cherish more tenderly than a Mother her carnal Son, as *Envy, Detraction, and Murmuring*. Now the better to preserve ourselves from these Vices, so pernicious and destructive to our Vocation, I briefly propose to you the following Considerations.

*Against Pride.* To represent to yourself very often the great misery and weakness of Man. Who says Man, says all Vanity. He is a wretched Creature, affirm'd an Ancient, whom Fortune tosses as a Tennis-ball, whom Misery and *Envy* poize in a ballance, whom Time despoils, Death

*Why is Earth and Ashes proud? When a Man shall dye, he shall inherit Serpents, and*

Kkk ij

takes

Beasts, and  
Worms. Eccli.  
10. 9, 13.

Job. 14. 1.

takes away, and of whom Inconstancy makes a continual *Metamorphosis*. He enters into the world by the gate of Sin, with a Body as frail, as his Spirit is barren. Weakness of mortal members, and Stupidity of heart are given him as a Portion of his birth, and a Necessity of his condition. Holy Job describes him thus, *As a horn of a woman, lives a short time, and is replenish'd with many Miseries: As a Flower he comes forth and is destroy'd, and fly's as a Shadow, and never abides in the same state: As Rottenness he is to be consum'd, and as a Garment that is eaten of the Moth.* But if you here give yourself leisure to consider the misfortunes and dammages, which Original Sin has caus'd in Man, you shall find matter enough to humble you, by reflecting how much Nature has been corrupted thereby; for as a Stone is drawn downward by its own weight, so are we carry'd by the corruption of Original Sin to what ever concerns our Flesh, our Vanity, and our Interest. We have a most lively sense for Earthly things, little or no relish for Heavenly; what should obey in us, commands; we are so miserable, that though we are Men and born for Heaven, we have the inclinations of Beasts, and hearts that tend only to the Earth. But if we will cast our eyes particularly upon our Faults, which spring from our own Fund; how many Subjects of confusion shall we find there? Whither do's not intemperance of our Tongue carry us; and with what negligence do we keep our Hearts? How inconstant are we in our good designs? How great lovers of our interest and convenience? How eager to do what pleases us? How full of self-love; how wedded to our own will and opinion? How violent in our Passions; how steadfast in our ill Habits, and how easy to let ourselves be carry'd away to what ever our corrupt Inclination prompts us? S. Gregory writing upon these words of Job, *Wilt thou shew thy power against a*

Job. 13. 21.

Leop.

*Leaf, which is carry'd to and fro by the Wind?* says, That it is with reason that Man is compar'd to a Leaf, because just as a Leaf moves at the least breath, so Man lets himself easily be tols'd up and down by all the winds of Passions and Temptations. One while he lets himself be transported with Anger; another while he abandons himself to vain Joy; sometimes Avarice and Ambition torment him; sometimes Pleasure and Sensuality carry him away; sometimes Pride elevates him, and sometimes Fear and Trouble doject and cast him down. Wherefore the Prophet *Isay* says very well, *We are all fallen like the Leaf, and our Iniquities like the Wind have carry'd us away.* The least wind of Temptation throws us down and carry's us away, we have no steadfastness in Virtue and good Resolutions; so that here's enough, wherewith to humble and confound ourselves. But they are not only our Sins and Imperfections which give us cause to do so, even our Good actions furnish us with occasions enough for that end, if we look so narrowly into ourselves as to mind them curiously, examining with how many faults and defects they are ordinarily mingl'd, according to the words of the same Prophet, *We are all become as unclean, and all our good Works as filthy Rags.* *Isai. 64. 6.*

Ah my Soul! Whereof then art thou proud? In being a Slave to thy Passions? Alas! what is due to thee, but only Damnation; which thou well know'st, thou hast often deserv'd? Why should'st thou expect to be preferr'd before thy Neighbours, who art more unfaithful and ungrateful to thy Creator, than all others whatsoever? Ah castif Creature! canst thou conceive thyself in a capacity of high Honours? No, dear *Jeſu*! I utterly disclaim them all; and desire, that all men may know my real unworthiness, that they may esteem me, treat me, and condemn me according to my Demerits. *ibid.*

Against *Vain-Glory* or the inordinate desire of Reputation and humane Applause. The malignity of this Vice consists *what haſt thou, that thou haſt not receiv'd?*

And if thou  
hast receiv'd,  
why do'st thou  
glory as though  
thou hadst not  
receiv'd? 1.  
Cor. 4. 7.  
1. Tim. 1. 17.  
Isai. 42. 8.

lists in this, that those who are infected with it, endeavour to rob God of the Glory, which by reason of his infinite Perfection belongs to him alone; according to the words of *S. Paul*; *To God alone, be Glory and Honour*; of which he is so Jealous, that he himself says in the Prophet *Isay*. *I will not give my Glory to another*. When therefore it happens, that we seek to draw to ourselves the Esteem and Praise of men, we transgress this ordinance which God has established, and do him an injury; because we endeavour in a manner that Men, who should have no other employment but to praise and honour him, employ themselves in praising and honouring Creatures; and we endeavour to replenish the hearts of Creatures with an Esteem of ourselves, which God has made, as Vessels to be fill'd with nothing else but with his own Honour and Praises. What is this, but to rob God of his Creatures hearts, and in a manner to drive him out of his own house? Can one commit a greater Evil than this, or imagine any thing worse, than after such a manner to rob God of his Glory? For though by your words you exhort Men to regard none but him; yet you wish in the bottom of your heart that they would turn their Eyes from him, and fix them upon yourself. He who is truly Humble, desires not to live in the heart of any Creature, but in the heart of God only; he seeks not his own Glory, but that of God alone; he desires not that any Person should entertain himself with him, but with God alone; and infine, he wishes that all the world should have God so in their hearts, that no other Object may ever have the least place in them; which effectually to procure in my Reader, I here advise him, often to ruminate and ponder the ensuing Points.

1. The super-eminent, surpassing, unexplicable and unconceivable Excellencies of God, compar'd to the indigency, baseness, misery, nothingness of Creatures; and the Adorations, Obla-

Oblations, Thanks-givings, Honours, Homages, Respects, and Reverences thereupon due to his Divine Majesty. 2. The blindness, incapacity, inconstancy, perverseness of mens Judgements who often love and admire all that, which is the most vicious. 3. The Frailty of honour and reputation. 4. The extreme Vanity of all worldly things. 5. The Misery of this present state, wherein all things invite us to Humility. 6. The Vanity of opinions, which afford us nothing but Wind. 7. The Tortures and Torments of a vain-glorious Spirit; how many submissions must he make? how many injuries must he dissemble? how many affronts must he swallow? and how many deadly sweats must he indure, to compass his design? And after all in the turning of a hand, all his Greatness forgotten and lost, and he many times for a final recompence laden with Disgrace. 8. The Worm, which gnaws all good works by the means of Vanity, and the shameful deprivation of Eternal comforts, to attend the search of Earthly smokes. *For in truth I tell you, they have already received their reward.* 9. The great necessity we have of Humility for our salvation, it being the element and orb of Virtues, the gate of Christianity, says S. Cyprian, and we ought not to think that man will be loyal to Faith, who is unfaithful to the Vertue of Jesus-Christ, to wit, Humility. 10. Often to call to mind this saying of our Holy Father: *As much as a Man is in the sight of God, so much he is, and no more.*

Math. 6. 2.

Luke 6.

O God! I renounce from the bottom of my heart all self-liking and vain complacence; which may arise from the Praises of men, or from Offices and worldly Honours; and likewise all vain delight and satisfaction springing from any gift of Nature or Grace, which is in me. Not to me, O dread Sovereign, not to me, but to thy holy Name, be Honour and Glory given. Be thou exalted, O Lord, above the Heavens, and thy Glory over all the Earth. Alas! what am I? All is thine, O Bountiful Lord.



Lord God ! nothing is mine, but Sin : and therefore I deserve only shame and confusion in all I can think, say, or do.

Against Covetousness, and the Care and Sollicitude of this world. 1. To reflect on the baseness, instability, barrenness, and vanity of all Sublunary things. 2. The wars and battels we must undergo to procure worldly Goods; and when they are got, what care to preserve them, what fear to lose them, and what sorrow when they are lost? 3. To consider that we live here like Birds, who are always hanging in the air, where either Fortune despoils, or Death mows the Meadow, and then it never grows again. It is a great stupidity of Spirit, if you account that to be yours, which you may daily lose, and which in the end you shall forgo for ever. Think not you have any thing yours, but yourself; all the rest is borrow'd, which you must infallibly restore, though when you know not. 4. Oftentimes to place yourself in thought, in that state you were born in from your Mothers womb, or in that state you must return to in the Earth. 5. That all the Goods you are in possession of, come from the earth, and are made for the use of an earthly Body; what esteem can a Soul make of them, unless she become Terrestrial? If you regard Necessity, you have but very little need of them; if your own sensual Appetites, you shall never satisfy them. 6. The Frailty in offending God through too much greediness of Temporal things. 7. The poor and short Pleasure taken in things we most ardently desire. 8. That God many times affords us plenty of Temporals, as a just punishment of our Sins. 9. To place all your Riches, Possessions, and Hearts-content in the bosom of God, the Prime of the Rich, who alone possesses all; being a Plenitude of joy, an Abundance which never fails, a Sweetness incorruptible, a Feast which consumes not, a perpetual Theater of delights, and a Flood of most pure contentments which flows over all Paradise.

When I had turn'd myself to all the works, which my Hands had done, and to the labours, wherein I had sweat in vain, I saw in all things vanity, and affliction of Mind. Wherefore I ceas'd, and my Heart renounc'd to labour any more under the Sun. Eccles. i. 2. Man passes as a shadow, and is troubl'd in vain: He gathers Treasures, and knows not to whom he shall gather them. Ps. 38. 7.

Paradise. O what Joy will it be to enjoy all without fear of losing any thing; to be Rich without Covetousness, to negotiate without Money, to possess unexhaustible Treasures without danger of Rust, Moth and Thieves, and to be ever living without fear of Death!

O my God! I here confess to thee my weakness. I know the Eye is never satisfy'd with seeing, the Ear with hearing, the Mind with possessing, nor the Soul with loving any thing but thee, her only amiable and satisfying Object. I acknowledge the most precious Treasures, the stateliest Fabricks, and the richest Magnificencies on Earth to be poor, mean, short of duration, insufficient, meer bubbles, and nothing in substance; witness the seven Wonders of the world so celebrated with the Ancients, now only seven silly Fables upon a piece of Paper. Why then, O my Senses, do you still roam abroad? Why intangle you yourselves in fading delights? Why beat you the air for vanities, and seek after lyes? And you, O my Soul, why perst you still to court that, which you own can never perfectly satisfy you? What blindness, what brutishness, what madness to leave the Creator and love his Creatures, to forsake God and adhere to them! No; my Lord, thou art more to me than all, I love thee above all, and for thy sake I freely forsake all. I set the world at defiance, with all its cares and superfluous businesses, and desire to be totally taken up with thy real and solid Entertainments.

Against *Envy*, which is a sorrow one has for the good of his Like, thinking it to be prejudicial to his own ends; a most unnatural and diabolical Vice, against which take the following Remedies. 1. To esteem nothing Great in this life, is the way to envy nothing. 2. To love only the great inheritance of the Land of the living, which never becomes less by the many and several Divisions made to those who possess it. 3. To consider attentively the Motives, which may excite us to love our Brother; as the participation of the same Nature, same Life, same Blood, same Profession, same Rule, same Faith, and such other reasons, which are as so

*By the Envy of the Devil, death enter'd into the world; and they follow him that are of his party. Sap. 2. 24.*

many knots of Amity. 4. The wretched life of Cain to live in Envy, and the rage of a discompos'd Spirit, which causes the Immortality of its being to contribute to the Eternity of its pains. 5. To consider, that how much the more we rejoyce at the Goods of another, so much the more we partake of them; as on the contrary, by how much the greater satisfaction we take in their Misfortunes, so much the greater share shall we have of them. 6. To behold how Envy, ere it is aware, serves many times to the Advancement of those who are envy'd. 7. To content ourselves with what we are, and with the state the divine Providence allots us, without attempting on forreign hopes, which would perhaps be great Evils to us. 8. To guard our Eyes with a careful heed, and divert them what one may from Objects, which are of power to excite many inordinate motions in the Soul of this kind. 9. Not to accustom yourself easily to believe those Tale-bearers, who, to gain your good liking by base servitude, relate the vices and disasters of the Party whom you envy. 10. Incessantly to labour in the mortification of Self-love, Pride and the exorbitant appetite of ones proper Excellency; as being the principal Root of the passion of Envy. For the great affection which many bear towards themselves, and the desire they shew of coveting to be in all things the only one of their kind, to have every where the highest place, to possess a petty Sovereignty in all favours, are the seeds of infinite many Jealousies: Which we then conceive, when we behold another more Powerful than ourselves, more Rich, more Beautiful, more Learned, more Vertuous; and that he is esteem'd and prais'd for the same. For we would rather draw and appropriate this Esteem and Praise to ourselves, and look upon that which another receives, as a theft, and as a good he takes from us. Behold from whence proceeds a malignant and base joy, or a certain sort of secret

secret satisfaction which we feel in our Souls, when some Misfortune has befallen our Brother; for then we imagine that this will humble him, and his Humiliation will increase our Esteem. Behold also from whence proceeds, that we sometimes endeavour directly or indirectly to lessen our Brothers reputation; either by using means to confound him in some dispute, or in mortifying him by some sudden word, which our Heart being full of Envy lets slip. All this is nothing else in the bottom but the irregularity of Self-love, the mortal enemy of a Religious Life, the bane of Communities, and the utter ruine of fraternal Charity. *For Charity,* says the Apostle, *rejoices not at evil, but is overjoy'd at good.* It rejoices not at the Humiliation of our Neighbour, but on the contrary wishes his Prosperity; and the greater it is, the greater also is its Joy. For he who truly loves another, wishes him as much good as himself, and rejoices as much at the good fortune and advantage of his Friend, as of his own. *You are our Brother, prosper therefore, and let your Increase mount to Millions.* Increase in virtue, in esteem, and in honour; since your increase and your advantages are so much mine, that it is impossible I should not always enjoy a most sensible pleasure in them. After a Merchant is in a Company or Association with others, their dexterity in Trading, and the Gain they make, is so far from giving him any trouble, that it is a great cause of joy; because all conduces to the profit of the Company; and he will receive as good a Return for his part, as any of his Partners. We ought in like manner to do the same; and rejoice as much at the Virtue, Learning, Honour, Advancement, and good Qualities of our Brethren, as of our own; because all turns to the advantage of the Order, the Goods whereof each one of us in particular do partake. Finally consider what our Holy Father says: "According to the Apostle, *No man*

1. Cor. 13..

Gen. 24. 60.

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Opusc. Tom. 2.  
Admonit. c. 8.

.. can say our Lord Jesus. but in the Holy Ghost. And  
 .. There is none that do's good, no nor one. Whosoever there-  
 .. fore envy's his Brother for a good, which God says and  
 .. do's by him, commits the sin of Blasphemy; because he  
 .. envy's the most High, who himself says and do's every  
 .. good thing.

O Caitiff Envy, the Hang-man of the envious! May'st thou  
 never find any habitation but in Hell, whence thou first cam'st  
 to trouble the peace of Men. Heavenly Father, I beseech thee by  
 that Eye which created Heaven, and which makes all the Bless-  
 ed; and thou Word Incarnate, by that Eye which has wept so  
 many tears of love and compassion over us, banish this Fury  
 from our Hearts, and make thy holy Charities there to flourish;  
 which shall by us for ever be as much ador'd, as they have  
 been to mankind profitable; who has no substance but in thy  
 Mercies.

*Keep yoursel-  
 ves from Mur-  
 muring, which  
 profits nothing:  
 And refrain  
 your Tongue  
 from Detrac-  
 tion, because  
 an obscure  
 speech shall not  
 pass in vain:  
 And the Mouth  
 that ly's, kills  
 the Soul. Sap.  
 1. 11.*

*Jac. 1. 26.*

Against Detraction, and Murmuring. 1. To represent  
 very often to ones self the Confusion we shall be put to at  
 the day of Judgement, wherein we must give an account of  
 every idle Word. 2. The Contentment to have kept back a  
 biting word, which had destroy'd a good Affair. 3. To take  
 away brotherly Hatred by Charity, and seriously bridle this  
 untam'd Tongue, untill it be master'd. 4. Strictly to observe  
 the rules of Silence prescrib'd by our Constitutions; firmly  
 perswading ourselves, we have just so much Religion, as  
 we have government of our Tongues, according to these words  
 of S. James: *If any man think himself to be Religious,  
 not bridling his Tongue, but seducing his Heart, this man's  
 Religion is vain.* 5. Seriously to reflect upon the great and  
 many advantages we reap by the means of Silence, which is  
 so great a Good; it being the preserver of peace and quietness  
 of mind, the harbourer of wisdom, the maintainer of devo-  
 tion, the instrument of all the most glorious enterprises, sage  
 council

counsels and mature resolutions; the safe-guard against vanity, the rule of conversation, the key of the heart, the bridle of our passions, and the promoter of all good, as Liberty of speech is the cause of all mischief. 6. To well imploy your Time, for intemperance of Tongue is an effect of ill govern'd Idleness. 7. To shun the occasion of Places, Persons, Affairs, which use to disturb the peace of your mind, and provoke you to intemperance of speech. 8. When you feel yourself mov'd, that the apprehensions of your Heart may not break forth by the Mouth, to re-enter into yourself, and ask truce of your Passion, stedfastly believing, that you shall forbear uttering words to your Brothers prejudice, if you understand the matter to the bottom before you begin to speak. 9. To consider how these Vices deprive us of five things very precious, to wit, Truth, Justice, Civility, Concord, and the splendor of the Spirit of God. 10. How dear they cost our Blessed Redeemer, who fought against ill Tongues in his life, and conquer'd them all in his death. The Gall and Vinegar, which he took to expiate the sins of this unhappy Member, do shew how great the evil was, since it needed so sharp a remedy; from whence proceed Blasphemies, Oaths, execrable Curses, Lyes, Scoffs, immoderate Jest, Scurrilities, indiscreet Promises, discovery of Secrets, Flattery, Dissimulation, breach of Friendship, Contentions, and a thousand other mischiefs not to be express'd. 11. That all the arrows of Reproach return upon the Calumniator, who oftentimes lives in this world as a solitary Wolf, tormented with a thousand mortal affrightments of a wicked Conscience, which make him to begin his Hell in this world, and finish it in the other without end. For what mercy can there be for a Detractor, who dyes in obloquies? So many Reproaches are so many Man-slaughters, wherewith all bloody, he goes to the Judgment of God, to receive the reward of his wickedness.

But for our further Instruction in this matter, it is here to be observ'd, that as we ought to have a particular care of not speaking ill of our Brother; so when we hear any thing said of him, which may give him any displeasure or resentment, we ought also to take care not to tell him, Such a one has spoke thus and thus of you. For this serves only to exasperate minds, cause trouble, discontent, and misunderstanding amongst Brethren; and there is nothing more pernicious to the good of Religion, nor that God has a greater horror of. *There are six things*, says the Wise-man, *that our Lord hates; and his Soul has a perfect detestation of the seventh, the Sower of discords amongst Brethren.* But if God detests such as these, Men do abhor them also, according to that other saying: *The Whisperer or Tale-carrier despises his own Soul, and shall be hated by all; and he who lives with him shall become odious to the whole world.* And this not without reason; for verily there is no Quality so unworthy, not only of a Religious man, but of any Person whatsoever. For what is more dangerous in a Community than a seditious Spirit, which is good for nothing else but to create dissensions amongst his Brethren? Whereby he charges himself with an employment that belongs to the Devil, who is the Father of discord and division. His Brother has let fall a word, that may perhaps have somewhat less'n'd the esteem of another's Wit, Capacity, or Merit; and thereupon he tells the Person what is said of him; what bitterness of Heart do you think this will give him against the Person that said it? You think you have done no hurt at all, and you have wounded him to the Quick. *The words of the Whisperer appear simple*, says the Wise-Man, *but they penetrate the bottom of the Heart.*

But if it be thus prejudicial to our Neighbour, and so disagreeable to God, to carry about such sort of stories, and

Prov. 6. 16, 19.

Eccij. 21. 31.

*The Whisperer and double tongue'd is accurst; for he has troubled many that were at peace. Eccij. 28. 15.*

Prov. 26. 22.

thereby sow discord among Brethren, what will it be to sow discord between Superiours and Subjects, to cause division between the Head and the Members, between a Father and his Children? May we not very justly say, that this would be much more abhor'd by God than the other? Yet notwithstanding little care is taken to keep ourselves from falling into so great an inconveniency as this is, The People of *Israel* were extremely affected to king *David*, and had oftentimes given evident proofs of their Affection and Obedience; yet frequently revolted, having heard *Absalom* speak ill of him, who blam'd the Conduct of his Father, and decry'd his Government. How often has it happen'd that a Religious person who liv'd well with his Superiour, had a high opinion of him, interpreted all his actions in good part, laid open to him even the most hidden secrets of his Heart? And yet all this is suddenly destroy'd, by a word that some one has inconsiderately let fall, and perhaps without the least ill intention. From whence proceed Suspicions, Diffidences, rash Judgements, Detractions, Murmures, and other ill offices; and sometimes it happens that the Evil increases after such a manner, that by secretly whispering and communicating the matter to one another, the Contagion thereby spreads itself over the whole Community. So that one cannot sufficiently exaggerate how prejudicial these kind of Reports and Stories may, and do often prove to the union, peace and quiet of Religion. Wherefore every one ought to look well to himself, and be very cautious and circumspect in what he says, *For we live to that man, by whom Scandal happens.* Wo be to him, who employs a sharp Tongue, to rip up the actions of Superiours that are in the place of God, who honours them with the title of God, and forbids all People to speak ill of them in these words; *Thou shalt not speak ill of* *Math. 18. 7.*

*Exod. 22. 28.*

of



of the Gods. Wo be to him who lessens the esteem and affection which Subjects ow to their Superiour, and gives them an aversion to him; by which means their Obedience grows cold, and they reap no profit from any thing that comes from him; which is properly to put a stop to all the Spiritual good they might have got by his means. Let us therefore, my dear Brethren, set a strict watch over our Tongues and Hearts; let us use all manner of care, *That no root of Bitterness*, as *S. Paul* calls its, *springs up among us, to the prejudice of others Souls*. We can never be too nice in this point of Murmuring and Detraacting; for although the thing in itself be light and trivial which we say or do; yet we must reflect, that it is always a matter of great importance, to destroy in your Brothers Heart the esteem, confidence and respect, which he ought to have for his Superiour, by reason of the ill consequences and bad effects it afterwards produces. The horrible Punishment, which follow'd upon the grumbling of *Core, Dathan and Abiron*, shews how heinous and highly provoking such Actions are, and what those that are guilty of them, may expect at the hand of God.

I will conclude this subject with a Discourse of our holy Father, to move my Reader still to a greater horror and detestation of it. His words are these: " Brethren, the sin  
 „ of Detraction is an enemy to the fountain of all Piety  
 „ and Grace, and to a most righteous God abominable; for  
 „ that the Detractor feeds himself with the blood of Souls,  
 „ which he kills with the sword of his Tongue. So much  
 „ greater is the malice of Detractors than that of Robbers,  
 „ by how much the Law of *Christ*, which is fulfill'd by the  
 „ observance of Piety, obliges us to desire more the good of  
 „ Souls than of Bodies. Besides, a Religious man that mur-  
 „ mures and back-bites his Brethren and Superiours, what  
 „ does he else, but fill his Mother Religion, with the gall

*Heb. 12. 15.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
 Collat. 18.*

„ of defamation and treachery ? Detractors are of the ge-  
 „ neration of *Cham*, who instead of hiding, discover'd his  
 „ Fathers nakedness ; so these , disclose and exaggerate the  
 „ failings of their Prelates and their Order, for which they  
 „ deserve the malediction of God. Like Swine , they  
 „ wallow in their mire , they swill and stuff themselves  
 „ with all manner of filthiness ; and with the defects and  
 „ dung of their Brethren , which they curiously search after ,  
 „ they nourish themselves , after the manner of those  
 „ unclean *Animals*, being more foul and besmear'd in their  
 „ Consciences , than they in their Bodies. And like so many  
 „ mad Dogs , they snarl and foam against Regular Ob-  
 „ servance and Corrections , continually barking at their Pre-  
 „ lates and their Order , and biting them as much as they  
 „ can. For of Detractors this is their common Cry , Virtue  
 „ I want , Learning I have none , I am not Master of any  
 „ commendable talent of Grace or Nature , so that I  
 „ am of no account either with God or Man. I know what  
 „ I will do ; I will cast a blot upon the Elect , and by that  
 „ means I shall curry favour with the Great ones. I know  
 „ my Superiour is a man like myself , and imploy'd sometimes  
 „ in the same office , which is to cut down the high Ce-  
 „ dars , that the low Shrubs may appear alone. Go to , thou  
 „ miserable Wretch ! satiate thyself with Man's flesh , since  
 „ thou canst not live without it , and gnaw the bowels of  
 „ thy Brethren. Such as these study to seem Good , but not  
 „ to be so ; crying out against Vices , but not putting away  
 „ Vices ; they praise only those , by whose Authority they  
 „ hope to be supported ; passing under silence such Commen-  
 „ dations as they think will not reach them whom they  
 „ praise. They sell the wanness of their macerated Counte-  
 „ nances for pernicious Praises , that they may pass for Spiri-  
 „ tual men , who challenge a right to judge all , themselves

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„ to be judg'd by none. They much delight in the opinion „ and reputation of Sanctity, but not in the works of Sanctity; and glory in the name of Angels, but are destitute „ of the virtue of Angels. Thus our Holy Founder. I have stay'd somewhat longer upon this Vice than the others; because being no less common than mischievous, it is of great importance for you to know the dreadful havock it makes in Communities, thereby the better to avoid it; for having a full view of it, and seeing it in its own colours, who will not abhor it?

O my Lord Jesus ! Set a guard, I humbly beseech thee, upon my Mouth, and take into thy keeping the keys of my Tongue and Hearing, shutting and opening them when it is convenient. That so both my Silence and my Talking, my Deafness and my Hearing, may always be inoffensive to my Neighbour, and agreeable to thy Divine Majesty.

Every one,  
Brethren,  
wherein he was  
call'd, in that  
let him abide,  
before God.  
1. Cor. 7. 24.  
Lay - Brothers  
forbid  
to study.

§. XIV. *And they that are ignorant of Learning, let them not care to learn.* ] These are Lay-Brothers, who according to this Text, ought to rest contented with their Lot, and not to desire to walk in great and marvellous things above themselves; but remain in the place where Providence has set them, serving our Lord in Humility and Simplicity of heart, answerable to their low Vocation; which requires no more of them, than what is necessary for saying their Beads, and performing the works injoynd them by their Superiours. And therefore to imploy themselves in Study would be so much loss of time, and hinder them from rendering the Community service in corporal Labours, which they came to Religion for. In conformity to which, the Statutes of my Province have ordain'd, that Superiours have a special care to keep them constantly employ'd in some work or other. That they do not permit them to study, and read promiscuously. all sorts

De Reg.  
Laicorum.

sorts of books; but if at any time some book of Devotion be allow'd them, that it be done with express leave of the Guardian, or of those whose care they are under. That they be kept within the bounds of Humility and Modesty, and not suffer'd to speak at the tables of Seculars, or elsewhere in the presence of Priests, but with civility and respect. That their Confessors diligently instruct, and admonish them of the obligations of their State; and the Guardians in the Refectory and Chapter-house, frequently make them exhortations in their Mother tongue, as occasion requires. Otherwise if it happen they be left to themselves, and that Superiours give them any the least scope, and they with this have some smattering in Learning, of Servants they turn Masters, and become untractable, saucy, imperious, unmortify'd, sensual, and lazy; in such sort, that instead of the Orders deriving profit from them, they serve for an eyesore, a burthen, and stone of Offence to us.

Amongst this number of the Ignorant, whereof our Holy Founder here speaks, are likewise to be reckon'd those Clerks, who, though they have perhaps a competent knowledge of the *Latin* tongue; yet are otherwise so very dull and stupid; and incapable of Sciences, that there is little hopes of their ever being able to acquire a sufficient stock, to Preach or hear Confessions. And therefore it would be prudence in a Superiour, out of the time of Quier-duties, to apply them to some other Exercises, proportion'd to their Capacities, and becoming their Character; that they may be always doing something, to shun Idleness; and serve the Community, if not in the quality of an Head or an Eye, at least in the condition of some more ignoble and inferiour Member.

But as for those Clerks, whom God has bless'd with sufficient Talents for the acquiring of knowledge, let them study in the name of God, such things as fill the Mind,

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Clerks are to be encouraged.

not swell it; as promote Piety, not hinder it; as edify their Neighbour, not satisfy Curiosity; as increase Humility, not cherish Pride. Such, as will make zealous Preachers, charitable Confessors, orthodox Lectors; as will enlighten the Understanding, inflame the Will, and unite the Soul to God her Creator by contemplation and divine love. In fine, such as will instruct them in the obligations of their State, regulate their Manners, help them to moderate their Passions, illustrate their Faith, confirm their Hope, and after the most effectual manner promote the honour and glory of God. To such as these, I say, it is both just and reasonable, that all aid, favour and encouragement be given; Learning being a gift of God, a strong buckler for defence of the Catholick Faith, an ornament to the Order, and a light to the People. And therefore, *Possess Wisdom, says the Wise-Man, because it is better than Gold: And get Prudence, because it is more precious than Silver.* And again, *Wisdom is better than all most precious Riches; and whatsoever is to be desir'd, cannot be compar'd to it.* It was this consideration that mov'd our holy Founder, though a perfect model of most profound Humility, to grant a commission to *S. Antony of Padua* to be Lector, briefly couch'd in these words: "Brother *Antony*, it pleases me, that you read *Divinity* to the Brethren, upon condition, you neither in yourself, nor in others extinguish the spirit of Devotion, which I earnestly desire of you, according to the Rule which we have promis'd to observe. Mark, he says, *Extinguish the spirit of Devotion*: For there is no kind of Science, even Theology itself, that is pleasing to our holy Founder, if not accompany'd with true Piety. And therefore he says in another place expressly: "I will not that my Brethren be solicitous and greedy of Book-learning, but I will have them to be well grounded in holy Humi-  
lity.

*Prov. 16. 16.*

*Prov. 8. 11.*

*Tom. 1.  
Epist. Ep. 3.*

What kind of  
Study most  
pleasing to  
our Holy  
Founder.  
*Collat. 15.*

„ lity, in pure Simplicity, in devout Prayer, and in my  
 „ Lady Poverty. And another time when the Question was  
 put to him, whether he intended, his Brethren should apply  
 themselves to the study of holy Scriptures? His answer was,  
 „ I am contented, providing they do not neglect the exer-  
 „ cise of Prayer, after our blessed Saviours example, who is  
 „ said, to have Pray'd, more than to have Read; and upon  
 „ condition, they study not so much to know or to speak,  
 „ as to act; and that when they shall have reduc'd to Prac-  
 „ tice what they have learn'd, to propose themselves as Pat-  
 „ terns to others to imitate. For I desire my Brethren may  
 „ be true Disciples of the Gospel, which assigns the King-  
 „ dom of heaven for Deeds, and not for Words; and as they  
 „ increase in Knowledge, they likewise in the same propor-  
 „ tion increase in pure Simplicity, not separating these two,  
 „ which our excellent and divine Master with his blessed  
 „ mouth has in the Gospel joyn'd together, to wit, the Sim-  
 „ plicity of the *Dove* from the Prudence of the *Serpent*.  
 And again, *Frier Minors* were given to the world, says  
 „ he, that by word and example they might be witness-  
 „ ses, followers, contemplators, and preachers of *Christs*  
 „ Death and Passion, of his blessed Incarnation and Life,  
 „ and of the benefits of our so precious Redemption; not  
 „ only by a daily remembrance and continual meditation of  
 „ his, and of his blessed Mothers so great anguishes and do-  
 „ lours, both interiour and exterior; but also by a real,  
 „ willing, and patient enduring of all contradictions, tribu-  
 „ lations, contempt, injuries, scorn, pains, infirmities for  
 „ his most holy Name. And therefore a certain Brother ask-  
 ing him, what book he should read for his greater profit and  
 Spiritual progress: " Read, says he, the book of the Cross;  
 „ apply not your mind to vain, curious and worldly Scien-  
 „ ces. Happy is the man that for God refrains such kind  
 of

Colloq. 15.

*Opusc. dub. A-*  
*pend. cur FF.*  
*MM. concessi*  
*sunt Ecclesia.*

*Opusc. Tom. 3.*  
*Apotheg. 32.*

Advice to  
Students not  
to neglect  
their Spiritual  
Duties on the  
account of  
their Studies.

of study. Behold the method of studying for Friar-Minors, if they will draw God's blessing and our Holy Founders upon themselves and their Studies, for the good of their Neighbours and their own Souls. And therefore it will not be amiss, if I here direct a word of Advice to the young *Priests* of the Order, and propose some Arguments, more fully to convince them, that they ought not to neglect the affair of their Salvation, upon the account of their Studies; by dispensing with themselves in those practices of Piety that regard their advancement in Vertue, which ought always to take place of Learning, according to that of the Wise-Man.

Ecdi. 25. 13.

*How great is he, that finds Wisdom and Knowledge? But he is not above him that fears our Lord. The Fear of God has set us above all things.*

§. XV. This is the order that God would have us keep in Religion; it is this that our holy Rule gives us here to understand, and which our Superiours require of us. We came to the School of Christy says *Hugo of Dina*, not so much for Letters, as for Vertues. And therefore ought to take care, not to quit our Spiritual Exercises, or to make them in hast or by halves, that thereby we may apply ourselves intirely to our Studies. For what will it profit a Religious man to become Learned, if he do's not in the first place satisfy the duties of his Profession? It imports but little whether you are more or less knowing, a *Philosopher* or *Divine*, or whether you Preach with greater or less eloquence; but that which is of the greatest Importance, is, that you become a true *Friar-Minor*; Mild, Meek, Humble, Poor, Obedient, Chast, Modest, Charitable, Patient. And if that be not the thing you aim at and labour to attain to, what is it you do? And what have you done all this while, if you have not done this? And to what have you apply'd your mind, if you have not study'd and endeavour'd to attain

to

to that, for which only, and for no other end, you are come hither; *If any one be perfect among the Children of men, and thy Wisdom be absent from him, he shall be counted for nothing.* Wherefore, my Scholar, examine your conscience, and ask yourself often this Question: *Amicus, ad quid venisti?* Friend for what art thou come hither? What Art, or what Profession, could I have made choice of, whereof I should not have render'd myself perfect, during the same time I have been in Religion? I have made choice of the Profession of being Religious, and hitherto I have advanc'd little or nothing in it. So many years are now past, since I was admitted into this School of *Vetue*, and I have not yet learnt the first Rudiments of it; I am yet to learn the smallest and least degree of Humility. Others become good Philosophers, and good Divines in seven years space; and I, after so many years, have not yet learn'd to be a good Religious man. How easy were it notwithstanding for us to be so, if we would but apply the same care and labour to acquire true Vertue, and the knowledge of the Cross for the affair of our Salvation, as we take to become eminent in Learning?

But that which ought still more to incourage us, faithfully to acquit ourselves of the duty of a Religious man, is, that these Spiritual Exercises are so far from hindring us from making any progress in Learning, that on the contrary they serve to obtain from God, all that light and knowledge we shall stand in need of, to succeed therein. *Atterius Magnus* was wont to say, that in Divine Sciences a greater advancement was made by Piety and Prayer, than by Study; and he alludg'd for proof of this, these words of the *Wise Man*, *I desir'd to have a right knowledge of things, and God gave it me; I invoc'd the Lord, and he fill'd me with the spirit of Wisdom.* It was likewise by this means, that

*Sap. 9. 6.*

Prayer and Devotion a great help to us in our Studies.

*Sap. 7. 7.*

S.



*S. Thomas of Aquin*, who study'd under him, became so knowing and inlightn'd; and which made him say, That for all that he knew, he was more oblig'd to prayer, than to his own labour or study. We read also of *S. Bonaventure* in the Chronicles of our Order, that when he taught Divinity at *Paris*, with a great deal of reputation; and when by his Works, he drew to himself the esteem and admiration of all the world; the same *S. Thomas* going one day to see him, begg'd of him to shew him those Books he made use of for his Studies. Whereupon *S. Bonaventure* led him to his Cell, and shew'd him some ordinary Books that lay upon his Table, and when *S. Thomas* told him he had a great mind to see those other Books, out of which he drew so many wonderful things; the Saint then shewing him his Praying place, upon which he had a *Crucifix*, Behold, Father, says he, all my Books; and behold the chief Book, out of which, I draw all that I teach, and all that I write; and it is by casting myself at the feet of my *Crucifix*, it is by demanding light in my doubts, it is by assisting at Mass, that I have made greater progress in Sciences, and that I have gain'd more true and greater Lights, than by the reading of any Books whatsoever. Take notice of this, you, who with so much eagerness hunt after Learning, and esteem all Time lost that is spent in Devotion. Where think you to find knowledge, if not with the God of knowledge? God, says the Scripture, is the Lord of Sciences, and on him depends the good order of all our thoughts. How much the more commerce one has with the Divine Essence, so much the more splendor he enjoys, as the Ancient Philosophers do assure us. We resemble those Statues, which spake in that proportion as the beams of the Sun reflected into their Mouths. We cannot so much as open our Lips to speak worthily of God, unless God, who made them, unloose them for his greater

p. 2. l. 2. c. 2.  
1. Reg. 2. 3.

greater Glory. And therefore *S. James* advises; *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God. For Blessed is the man, whom the Lord shall instruct, and shall teach out of his Law.* See then, Young Man, what need you have of divine Help, of Prayer and Devotion, of Virtue and Innocency of life, so become Learned.

Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, says the devout Author of the *Following of Christ*, but only to love God, and wholly to serve him. This is the highest wisdom, by Contempt of the world, to tend towards the kingdom of Heaven. High words make a man neither holy nor just; but a Vertuous life makes him dear to God. What will it avail thee, to dispute profoundly of the *Trinity*, if thou art void of Humility, and thereby art displeasing to the *Trinity*? I had rather feel Compunction, than understand the Definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of all the Philosophers, what would that profit thee without the grace of God? And if I did understand all that is to be known in the world, and were not in Charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my Deeds? How much the more thou know'st, and how much the better thou understand'st, so much the more grievously shalt thou be judg'd, unless thy Life be also more holy. Be not therefore extoll'd in thine own mind for any Art or Science which thou know'st; but rather let the knowledge given thee, make thee more fearful. There are many things in the world, which to know do's little or nothing profit the Soul; and he is very unwise, that bestows his labour about any other than what concerns his Salvation. What avails it to dispute and contend about dark and hidden things, about *Genus* and *Species*, and so many other barren and empty speculations of the Schools, both in Philosophy and Divinity? Whereas for being igno-

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*Jac. 1. 5.  
Ps. 93. 12.*

*De Univ. Chr.  
l. 1. c. 1. 2.*

rant of them, we shall not so much as once be reprehended for it at the Day of Judgement. It is a great Folly to neglect those things that are profitable and necessary for our eternal Welfare, and to give our minds to that which is curious and hurtful. Thus far this holy Man.

How vain all Learning is destitute of good works.

We may well say, all those great Doctors of the Schools burn themselves with their own Light, who have all God's Law by heart, but never have any heart to that Law. They know the Scriptures, all Learning and Sciences; they understand every thing but themselves; they can see spots in the Sun; they give new names to the Stars; they persuade themselves, that God is all that they apprehend. But after all this heap of knowledge, they are found to be like the Sages of *Pharaoh*; and can produce nothing but blood and frogs. They imbroid both Church and State with their new-fangl'd opinions, stain their own lives, and at their deaths leave nothing to continue but the memory of their Sins. It would be more expedient for them, rather than have such light, to carry fire, wherewith to be burning in the love of God, and not to swell and burst with that kind of knowledge. All Learning which is not joyn'd with a good Life, is like a Picture in the air, which has no Table to make it subsist. It is not sufficient to be elevated in Spirit, like the Prophets, unless a man do enter into some perfect imitation of their Vertues. Our Christianity teaches us, that we should be more knowing and skilful in the practice of our Life, than of our Tongue; that we should be Philosophers and Divines, more by imitating God, than by any curious inquiry of his Greatness; and that we are rather made to perform great actions, than to speak them. *For the kingdom of God is not in words, but in power. We must have a special care, that our Hands do not give our Mouth the lie. What can we gain in the judgement of God, by being like those*

1. Cor. 4. 20.

those Trees, which have a fair out-side garnish'd with leaves, yet good for nothing but to give a shadow, and to make a little noise when the Wind blows? God requires of us Fruit, since he is the Father of all fertility, and nothing is barren in the land of the Living. And therefore our Holy Father says, " That those Brethren that are carry'd away with  
 „ the Curiosity of vain knowledge, in the day of Tribulation will find their Hands empty. For which cause I could  
 „ wish, that they would rather now indeavour to strengthen  
 „ and fortify themselves with solid Virtues, that when the  
 „ Day of anguish shall approach, they may find our Lord  
 „ with them in their troubles. For the time will come, when  
 „ their Books shall avail them nothing, but be left up and  
 „ down in windows, and thrown into holes and corners.

I will conclude with the Example of a holy Man, which I propose likewise as a Means to allay in our Studious youth, their ardent thirst of Humane Sciences, and excite in them a desire to apply themselves to the study of Vertue and Perfection. It is *S. Dorotheus*, who having been a very hard Student in the world, serv'd himself of this Expedient to become a true Religious man and servant of God, after he had been a Slave many years to his curiosity and the covetousness of knowledge. Here's what he writes of himself. When I study'd in the world, says he, I took my Studies so much to heart, that I thought of nothing else; and had it not been for one of my Friends, that took care to provide me something to eat, and to call me at Dinner-time, I had never thought of eating. The vehement desire I had to learn went so far, that when I was at Table I had my Book always open before me, that I might eat and study at the same time; and at night when I came from School, I presently lighted my candle, and study'd till mid-night; and when I laid down to sleep, I took my Book into my Bed; and after I

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*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
 Collat. 15.*

The Example  
 of a holy  
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*Dorothe. Destr.  
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had slept a while, I fell to reading again, and was so wholly taken up with this passion of Studying, that I could take no delight in any thing else. Since I came to be a Religious man, I have often reflected, and said to myself; If thou didst heretofore take so much pains, and wert so zealous to acquire Eloquence, what great pains and care ought'st thou to take now in order to acquire true Vertue? And this very thought, says he, was a great help to me, and gave me fresh courage and new strength.

Let us animate ourselves with the same consideration towards the acquiring of Perfection, seriously reflecting that we came to Religion, not to be Doctors or Preachers and men of great Learning, but only and purely to become true and perfect Religious men; and therefore from henceforward let all our aim and application be, how to attain to the Knowledge and Love of God, which is the greatest, and indeed our only Affair in this world; *This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God; and Jesus-Christ, whom thou hast sent.* And forming hereupon a pious Resolution, let us say;

Joan. 17. 3.

O my Soul! Why seek'st thou in Books that, which thou can'st no where find but in thy God, thy Jesus, in whom are all the Treasures of science and wisdom; who is thy only center, rest, satiety, and security? What is all worldly knowledge, but vanity of vanities? How mean and foolish is all wisdom, which provides not for Eternity? Ah, my good God! how it grieves me, that I have given so much of my precious Time, to the pursuit of such poor Studies and getting such empty Notions, which now I perceive, do so little profit me in order to this only solid and Soul-saving Science? Lord! I will henceforth employ all my diligence, endeavours, time, talents, wit, will, intentions, pretensions on that alone, which will most advantage thy Honour, and best advance my Salvation. My whole Study shall be to know thee, my God and my All, to contemplate thee, to please, praise, and love thee in this world, that I may live and reign with thee in thy glorious Kingdom of Eternity.

§. XVI.

§. XVI. *But be careful, above all things to desire to have the Spirit of our Lord, and his holy Operation.* ] The Spirit of our Lord Jesus, is the spirit of Obedience, Modesty, Meekness, Humility, Poverty, Mortification; the spirit of Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord. And his holy Operation, are the effects of the same divine Spirit; such as are the Acts of the fore-said virtues, and principally Prayer, Meditation, and Union of the Soul with God by divine Love; which then happens, when the devout Soul by the assistance of Grace, transforms herself wholly into her Well-beloved; and becomes like him as much as she may, in Actions, Passions, Affections, in the practices of Piety and of the works of Mercy as well corporal as spiritual, and lastly in the heroick Acts here mention'd, to wit, to pray with a pure Heart, to be Humble and Patient, and to love our Enemies. Behold in short the Spirit of our Lord and his holy Operation, ( which in substance is nothing else but Christian Perfection or the Love of God ) as opposite to the spirit and operation of the World, the Flesh and the Devil; and is the same, which the Apostle understands by the Old and New man, or the Carnal and Spiritual.

Mark, he says: *Above all things to desire to have this Spirit.* As if he should say, it is not sufficient to arrive to or attain christian Perfection and divine Love, to have only a simple will, wish or desire thereof; it must be an efficacious one, a vehement hunger and thirst after it. For as S. Hierom upon these words, *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after Justice, for they shall be satisfied*, observes very well; That it is not enough to have a slight desire of Virtue and Perfection; but we must have a great hunger and thirst for it; so as to cry out with the Royal Prophet, *Even as the Idlers long for the Fountains of waters, so my Soul*

*if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is not his. Rom. 8. 9. What is understood by the Spirit of our Lord and his holy Operation.*

1. Cor. 2.

Coloss. 3.

The Desire of the love of God the best means to acquire it.

Math. 5. 6.

Pf. 42. 2.

Sep. 6. 18.

do's incessantly long after you, O my God! It is so necessary for us to be strongly affected with this Desire, that all our spiritual Advancement depends upon it. This is the first Principle which disposes us to it, and the true means to acquire Perfection. *The beginning of Wisdom* (or the knowledge and love of God, in which this perfection consists) is to have a true and strong Desire to obtain it, says the Wise Man. The Philosophers also say very well, that in all matters, and especially in our Moral actions, the End is the first Wheel that sets us on work; so that the more passionately we desire this End, the more care and fervour we imploy to obtain it. And we shall the more passionately desire it, by how much the greater Esteem we have for it, because the growth which this Esteem will make in our hearts, will be the Measure, not only of our spiritual Advancement in particular, but also of Perfection in general. The reason is, because we desire nothing, but according to the Esteem we have of it; for our Will being a blind Faculty, that pursues nothing but what our Understanding proposes to it; that Value which our Understanding sets upon any object, becomes of necessity the measure of our Desires; and our Will being the absolute Mistress, that commands all the interior and exterior Faculties of our Soul, we never strive or labour any further in acquiring any thing, but according to that degree, wherein our Will is mov'd to desire it. Wherefore it is very necessary we should have above all things, an Esteem of the spirit of our Lord Jesus and his holy operation; to the end we may also desire it above all things, and apply ourselves with all care and diligence to obtain it. For all these things have such a relation one to the other, that the measure of the one, is the infallible rule of the other.

O my benign and bountiful Lord Jesus! My Life, my Love,  
and

and my All. Infuse into me this thy divine Spirit, which is the only Desire and Joy of my heart. My Soul thirsts after it, as the wearied Stag after the refreshing waters; she is become through thy blessing intirely sensible of the inestimable Value of so precious a favour, and zealous of her own good, covers an intimate conjunction with thy dear self, her beloved object. Ah! who will give her the wings of a Dove, that she may strongly soar up to thee, her amiable Sovereign; and sweetly rest in thee, her only satisfying Center?

*To pray to God always.*] Making a continual and daily Prayer of our whole Life, by desiring and seeking the kingdom of God, his glory, and the accomplishment of his blessed will in all we think, say, or do. *With a pure Heart.*] Clean and free from all stain of sin, from distracted thoughts, and from all inordinate cares, desires and affections. To which our Holy Founder in his first Rule, chap. 22. exhorts us in these words: "My Brethren, let us have a special care, that we do not, under pretext of any gain, employment or business, lose or take our Lord out of our Hearts. But in holy Charity, which is God, beseech all the Brethren, as well Ministers as others, that all impediments remov'd, and all care and solicitude laid aside, they will endeavour, the best manner they are able, to love, serve and honour our Lord God, with a clean Heart and a pure Mind, which he seeks above all things. And let us always prepare a mansion and dwelling-place for him within our Breasts, who is our Lord God Omnipotent, Father, Son, and holy Ghost, who says: Watch at all times praying, that you may be worthy to escape all those Evils which are to come, and to appear before the Son of man.

This purity of Heart is a condition absolutely necessary for all such as address themselves to God in Prayer. *For if I have beheld Iniquity in my heart, our Lord will not hear.* When Water is troubl'd, we can neither see ourselves, nor any thing else

*I will that men  
pray in every  
place, lifting  
up pure hands.  
1. Tim. 2. 8.*

*Pf. 65. 18.*



elfe in it; so when our Hearts are not pure and clean from all terrene Affections, and are not at quiet and free from a thousand vain Impertinencies, we can never see the Face of God in Prayer, that is, we can never penetrate the depth of his Mysteries, and he will never communicate himself to us. For Prayer is properly a spiritual View of the works and mysteries of God. And as to see well with our Corporal eyes, we must have them neat and clean; so to see the works of God with the eyes of our Soul, we must have a pure and clean Heart. Do you desire to see God, says *S. Austin*? Take care first to purify your Heart, and cast out of it whatsoever is displeasing to him. The Abbot *Isaac* in *Cassian*, explicates this by an excellent Comparison. He says, that our Soul is like to a Feather, that is so very light that the least wind raises it from the ground, and makes it fly about in the Air, when it is neither wet nor besmeared with pitch, nor glued to any thing that holds it fast; but if it be glued to something that hinders it from rising, it is forc'd to remain upon the ground amongst dirt and filth. So if our Soul be pure and free from all things, the least breath or whisper of the holy Ghost in time of Meditation will raise it even to God himself; but if it be ty'd to Earthly things, if it be fully'd by its irregular Passions, it becomes so heavy that it cannot elevate itself to Heavenly things, nor have any satisfaction in Prayer. *Moses* was forbid to approach the burning Bush, till he pull'd off his Shooes. And how can you think to approach towards God, or come to any conversation with him, till you have cast away your inordinate inclinations, your passions, your superfluous cares, your imperfections and defects, and all the ties you have to the things of the world?

O my God! since it is your pleasure that I pray to you at all times with a pure and clean Heart, infuse into my Soul your holy

Serm. 2. de  
Ascen. Dom.

holy Spirit, without which what am I but a stupid Log, unable to raise myself to your Divine Majesty by thought, word, or deed. Be pleas'd to bridle my interiour Powers, and make me rally my straggling Affections in your presence, that I may fix them on no other object but yourself; that so both with Heart and Voice I may always keep time and tune in blessing your holy Name.

*To have Humility and Patience in persecution, and infirmity.* ] According to that of Ecclesiasticus 2. 4. *All that shall befall thee receive; and in sorrow sustain, and in thy humiliation have Patience. For gold and silver are try'd in the Fire; but acceptable men in the furnace of Humiliation.* So much do we participate with God, says S. Ambrose, as we can suffer by his Example. He has taken a Body to be able to suffer, and to make himself altogether the Mirrour of sufferers, and the Reward of those who have patiently indur'd. If we suffer not to imitate him, our Soul is no longer ours; for it is the word of the Son of God, that we possess not this Soul but by the means of Patience. If we leave it, we lose all. Suffering is our Trade, our Profession, our daily Bread. While we are in this world we must fight, on what side soever it happen. Our Life is a continual warfare, and our Days are champions which enter the Lists. There is no greater Temptation, than to have none at all. Sleeping water do's nourish poison; Motion is the worlds soul; fighting against Temptations is the soul of Vertues, and Glory do's spring and bud out of Tribulations. What a folly to believe a Paradise, an eternal Life, a *Jesus-Christ*, who made to himself a ladder of the Cross to ascend to the throne of his Glory, and we in the mean while to be desirous to live here with arms across? To see the Master open the way to Heaven through so many Thorns, and the Servant not to be willing to tread but upon Flowers? To see under a Head all wasted and worn with suffering delicate Mem-

Where Humility is, there is Wisdom. Prov. 11. 2. Patience is necessary for you; that doing the will of God, you may receive the promise. Heb. 10. 36. Humility and Patience two vertues necessary in Afflictions.

bers ; as one should make to a *Colossus* of Brass feet of Flax ! He gave up his Soul in the arms of the Cross to conquer our Souls. We shall never be worthy of him , till we bear the ensigns of his War , and the ornaments of his Peace. Every thing is a Paradise to him , that knows how to love the Cross ; and every thing is a Hell to those , who fly from it ; and no body fly's it , but shall find it. It is the Gate of our Mortality , whether we must all come , though we turn our backs to it.

The Advan-  
tages deriv'd  
from Afflic-  
tions.

*Tob. 12. 13.*

*4. Reg. 2. 9.*

Again , there is no shorter way to Vertue than a well manag'd Affliction , and therefore it was necessary to maintain Adversity in the world , as the Nurse of great and generous actions of Christianity. *It was necessary* , says the Scripture , *to try thee by Tribulation , because thou wast acceptable to God.* It is a matter almost impossible to preserve a great Vertue in perpetual Prosperity ; one must be more than a Man , and to have a double Spirit. Which is excellently well observ'd by *S. Austin* upon the words of *Elizus* ; *I intreat your spirit may be doubl'd in me.* *Elizus* , says he , begg'd the spirit of *Elias* might be doubl'd in him , because he was to live in the favour of Court and worldly Prosperities , where the way is more slippery and dangers most frequent. His Master *Elias* had pass'd his life in many Persecutions , & therefore a Singular spirit was sufficient for his direction ; Adversity not being so difficultly born as Prosperity. But insomuch as eminent Fortunes are subject to deep drunkennesses and supine forgetfulness of God , the Prophet says by an instinct of the Divinity ; *Let your spirit be doubl'd in me.*

Prosperity under the shew of Felicity deceives us , Tribulation is ever true. The one flatters us , the other instructs us ; the one ties up our Senses and Reason , the other unhinds them ; the one is windy , empty , giddy , ignorant ; the other

other sober, reserv'd, and prudent; the one withdraws us from real good by the allurements of Vanity, the other reduces us by a wholesom way into the Duty from whence we wander'd. *S. Bernard* says excellently: Prosperity is in weak and inconsiderate Souls, as Fire to Wax, and the Sun-rays to Snow. *David* was very wise, and *Salomon* much more, yet both charm'd by the great success of Affairs lost understanding, the one at least in part, the other wholly. We must affirm, there is need of a strong Spirit to subsist in Adversity, without change of Reason or Constancy; but it is much more hard to tast very pleasing Prosperities, and not be deceiv'd. This is the cause why wise Providence, ever to keep Vertue in breath, ceases not to exercise it in this honourable List of great Souls, and we behold that following these proceedings, it thence derives great advantages and many beauties. Which made the Saints and Servants of God not only not to afflict themselves at Tribulations, but on the contrary to rejoyce, because of the Profit that was to be drawn from them; *knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience; and Patience, Experience; and Experience, Hope; and Hope confoundeth not.*

Rom. 5. 4.

Since then of necessity we must enter the Lists and engage our Enemy, let us Arm ourselves for it. Humility and Patience are weapons of an excellent temper, which our holy Founder advises us to use in this Conflict. Humility is the book of Saints; wherein we read the Greatness, Goodness and Justice of God, and our own Nothing, Misery, Baseness, Ingratitude and Contempt; and thereby are mov'd to acknowledge God's Mercy towards us, and to confess that what we suffer is a thousand times less than what for our Sins we deserve. Patience is a vertue that sets the Seal upon all others, ever the first in the List, and the last in the Triumph, without which there is no Crown

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The hope of  
future Glory  
a great com-  
fort in Afflic-  
tions.

Rom. 8. 18.

to be gain'd. To these two I would willingly add a third, to comfort us in our Afflictions ; which is, to turn away the eye of our consideration from what we suffer, and hold it perpetually fix'd upon the Reward : *For the Sufferings of this life have no proportion with the Glory to come that shall be reveal'd in us.* A great unhappiness which makes many to sink under the burden of Tribulation, is, that they have their minds so stretch'd and bent upon the thought of what they indure, that they cannot abide to behold the Reward which waits on them. When the forty Martyrs were in the frozen Lake, thirty nine of them look'd back upon the future Crown; and one of them unhappily thought of nothing but his Punishment. All of them remain'd victorious, except this wretched creature; who foiling the glory of his Patience, came out of the pool to die presently after in his Infidelity. Do you not think, that which comforted our Saviour on the Cross in that bottomless Abyss of dolours was a Mirrour of Glory, where he saw all his Sufferings turn'd into Crowns ? Behold the course which is to be held in Persecution and Infirmary ! To stay little on the Present, and rest in a strong apprehension of the Future; and ever to have these golden words of *S. Paul* ingraven in your heart ; *A short moment of Tribulation works in us an eternal weight of Glory.*

2. Cor. 4. 17.

O my most gracious Sovereign ! I do here offer myself to suffer whatever thou shalt please to lay upon me. Strike O my God, scourge, burn, wound, cut, and kill my Body, so thou pardon my Sins, and spare my Soul for Eternity ; in view whereof all Sufferings though never so painfull shall seem sweet and short to me. And I beg of thee, my compassionate Redeemer, some small communication of that divine Spirit, wherewith thou didst so patiently indure the torments of the Cross ; that so uniting all my afflictions and infirmities to thy venerable Passion, they may acquire that dignity which their own nature deny's

deny's them, to be acceptable to thy Divine Majesty in order to satisfy thy Justice, and appease thy Wrath.

*And to love them that persecute, reprehend, and reprove us : Because our Lord says, Love your Enemies, and pray for them that persecute, and calumniate you.] That you may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven, who makes his Sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and rains upon the just and unjust. For if you love them only that love you, what Reward shall you have ? Do not also the Publicans this ? And if you salute your Brethren only, what do you more ? Do not also the Heathens this ? Be you Perfect therefore, as also your heavenly Father is Perfect. And love them that persecute you : Love them, I say, as the Authors of your Happiness. Because, Blessed are they that suffer persecution for Justice, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.] Which our holy Founder gives us to understand more distinctly in his first Rule, where he says : " Brethren, let us all attentively consider that our Lord says ; Love your Enemies, do good to those that hate you. For our Lord Jesus-Christ like a wife, whose Foot-steps we are to follow, call'd him his Friend who betray'd him, and to those that crucify'd him he freely offer'd himself. All those therefore are our Friends that unjustly give us troubles, vexations, tribulations ; that put us to confusion, that do us wrong, inflict on us pains, torments, martyrdom and death ; whom we ought therefore much to esteem and love, because by so doing they afford us means whereby to gain Everlasting Life.*

*Math. 5. 44.*

The love of Enemies recommended to us.

*Math. 5. 10.*

*1. Reg. 6. 22.*

Methinks it should be harder for a good Christian to hate, than love his Enemy. For Hatred makes him our Equal, whereas Love places us quite above him. By hating a man's Enemy, he breaks the Laws of God ; he fights against the Incarnation of Christ, which was acted to unite all things  
in

in the bands of Love. He gives the Lie to the most blessed *Eucharist*, whose nature it is to make the hearts of all Christians the same. He lives like another *Cain* in the world, always disquieted by seeking Revenge, and it is a very death to him to hear another mans Prosperity. Whereas to love an Enemy, do's not bind us to love the Injury he has done us; for we must not consider him as a Malefactor, but as a man of our own Nature, as he is the Image of God, and as he is a Christian. God do's only command perfect things, not impossible. That which is very hard to flesh and blood, becomes easy by the help of Grace. Our blessed Saviour *Jesus-Christ* being the Father of all Harmony, can, and do's reconcile all Contrarieties at his will and pleasure.

O God of all holy Affections ! when shall I love all which thou lovest, and have in horreur all that displeases thy Divine Majesty ? If I cannot love in some Person his defects and sins, I will love in him thine Image, and in that will I acknowledge thy Mercies. If thou hast chosen him to exercise my Patience, why should I make him the object of my Revenge, since he gives me Trouble to gain me a Crown. He is a Hammer to polish me and make me bright, I will not hurt him, but reverence the Arm that strikes me. I resign all Vengeance into thy hands, since it is a right reserv'd for thy Almighty Power. Give me O most Mild Redeemer the grace to suffer, and let the Sacrifice of my sufferings mount up to thy propitiatory Throne, to obtain thy Mercy for all those that do me wrong.

The love of  
God the sum  
of Christian  
perfection,  
and the only  
scope of S.  
*Francis's* Rule

To conclude, all the above mention'd A&ts (I said) are the Effects or Operations of the most holy Spirit of our Lord *Jesus*, wherein consists the excellency of christian Perfection or divine Charity; the only scope, end, aim and design of *S. Francis's* Seraphical Rule. For all the Austerities which it prescribes, all our practices of Piety, our vows of Poverty Chastity and Obedience, our Fasts, Disciplines, Watchings, our Course Habits, want of Shoos, Money, Lands, Houses, Possessions,

Possessions, going on Foot, the renouncing our own Judgements Wills and Affections, abandoning Father, Mother, Wife, Brothers and Sisters, Offices, Dignities, Pleasures, and whatever else flesh and blood can cover; all have no weight with us, no value, worth nor esteem any further, than as they conduce towards the acquiring or preserving in us this Spirit of our Lord, and exercising his holy Operations: Which they do, by helping us to overcome and triumph over our Enemies, the World, the Flesh and the Devil; and to raise our Intellectual man currishly trampled under the feet of Concupiscence and its bestial Passions, to the Souls proper Sphere, which is the Knowledge of God and the Union of our will with him by love. So to be able by a perfect Conformity with *Jesus-Christ*, and an intire Transformation or change into him, to say as the Apostle did: *With Christ I am nailed to the Cross; Gal. 2. 19. and I live, now not I; but Christ lives in me.* This is what we *Frier-Minors*, above all things desire and seek after; to which we bend all our forces, strength, and faculties both of Body and Soul. It is our glory, our riches, our contentment, our sanctity, and the very top of all our Perfection. Wherein, *He that perseveres to the end, Math. 10. 22. shall be sav'd.* ] Shall be everlastingly happy with the Vision and Fruition of that lovely Face of the same Lord *Jesus*, which makes all the Blessed in heaven, where this divine Love will be compleat. Now that my Reader may the better understand, what progress he has made since his entry into the Order towards acquiring this celestial Vertue, behold here the several Acts and Degrees thereof.

§. XVII. To love God above all, and in comparison of The several  
 him to despise all. To account ones self unhappy, if but Acts and De-  
 a very moment deliver'd from his sweet *Ideas*. To do all that grees of divi-  
 may be, and to indure all things possible to come near him. ne Love.

To



To imbellish and adorn our Soul to please him. To be always present with him, either corporally as in the Sacrament, or spiritually as in Prayer. To languish perpetually with the desire to behold him face to face. To love all which is for him, and to hate all which is not for him. To desire that he may be declar'd, confess'd, prais'd and ador'd by all the world. To entertain all the most sublime thoughts that is possible of his dear Person. To pass over with sweetness all the Acerbities suffer'd in his Service. To account all things worse than a Dung-hill to gain him. To accommodate ones self to all his Motions, and to receive both sad and ioyfull things with his Countenance. To apprehend the least atomes of Sin, through a notable Fidelity with which we desire to serve him. Not to stick to Earth nor Self-love by any humane and natural considerations in all ones Actions, but to tread under foot all respect of flesh and blood, to run before the Cross, and to bear the greatest Adversities with a generous Patience. To love our Enemies. To do good to our Persecutors. To expose our Life for the salvation of a Neighbour. And lastly, to serve him without anxiety, or expectation of Reward. To say truly, they had need to be Persons most Heroick to go so far, and there is no doubt but this is the full accomplishment of Love.

Notwithstanding, nine Degrees are also added of *Seraphick Love*, that concern Contemplatives, which are : The *Solitude* of a Heart thoroughly purify'd from all the forms of Creatures : *Silence* in a sublime tranquillity of Passions : *Suspension*, which is a mean degree between Angel and Man : *Inseparability*, which adheres to its Well beloved for an Eternity, not admitting the least disunion : *Insatiability*, which never is satiated with Love : *Indefatigability*, which induces all labours without weariness : *Languor*, which causes the Soul to dissolve and melt on the heart of  
its

its Beloved : *Extasy*, which causes a destitution of the Vegetative and Sensitive soul, totally to actuate the Intellectual : *Deisformity*, which is a degree approaching to beatifick Love. Then is there made in the Soul a deluge of mysterious and adorable Love, which drowns all humane thoughts, which swallows all earthly affections, which flies to the superiour region of Man, which hides all that is eminent in Sciences, transcendent in Vertue, great in Imagination, and which causes the Spirit to forget itself, and to look on nothing but Heaven.

O my most amiable Lord *Jesus* ! give me this Love, draw all the powers of my Soul to thee. I ask of thee, sweet Spouse of my heart, no enlargement of earthly Treasures, no addition to worldly Goods or Glories. I only beg the riches of thy pure Love, and a prosperous progress in thy perfect Charity; that I may seek thee in all, prize thee above all, and live content with thee, who art alone to me all in all. O Love of my God ! the Life of my soul, the Crown of my head, the Jewel of my heart ; I dedicate to thee all my works, to thee I consecrate all my future indeavours ; I give up Tree, Branches, Leaves, Flowers, Fruit, All I am or have, by an intire, irrevocable, and eternal Donation. I will not live, but to love thee ; nor breath, but to bless thee. O that I could incessantly, cordially, fervently break forth into acts of Love to my loving Lord ! O that I could continue them without interruption all the moments of my Life, and Die in the height of this divine exercise !



That the Brethren enter not into the Monasteries of Nuns.

## CHAP. XI.

*I strictly command all the Brethren, that they have no suspected Company or Counsel of women. And that they enter not into the Monasteries of Nuns, except such as have a special icence from the Apostolical See. Neither let them be God-fathers of men or women, lest by this occasion there arise Scandal among the Brethren, or of the Brethren.*

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## THE EXPOSITION.

2 Cor. 7. 32.

**H**E that is without a Wife, is careful for the things that pertain to our Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a Wife, is careful for the things that pertain to the World, how he may please his Wife; and he is divided. And the Woman that is unmarried and the Virgin,

*Virgin, thinks on the things that pertain to our Lord; that she may be holy both in Body and in Spirit. But she that is marry'd, thinks on the things that pertain to the world, how she may please her Husband. And this I speak to your profit; not to cast a snare upon you, but to that which is honest, and that may give you power, without Impediment, to attend upon our Lord.* Behold the reason, why our holy Mother the Church requires of all that consecrate themselves to God and make profession of a monastical Life, the vow of Chastity, as one of the three Ingredients that go to the making up of a Religious State; whose admirable praises both the Scripture and Fathers advantageously set forth.

*O how beautiful is the Chast generation with glory !* says the Wise-Man. *For the memory thereof is Immortal ; because it is known both with God, and with Men. When it is present, they imitate it, and they desire it when it has withdrawn itself, and it triumphs crown'd for ever, winning the reward of undefil'd conflicts. All weight is not worthy a continent Soul.* Chastity is the profession of Angels, a Virtue wholly celestial, consecrated by the example of the worlds Saviour, of his most holy Mother, and of so many noble Souls ; who, freed by means thereof from the disquiets of the World, from the noise and care of a Family, of Wife and Children and domestick incumbrances, from the mire of carnal concupiscence and the dregs of flesh and blood, have spiritualiz'd themselves as it were, made like to those celestial Powers that assist night and day before the throne of God. This is what *S. Bernard* gives us to understand, when speaking of Religious men, he says : Your Profession is most sublime, it is higher than the Heavens, it is equal to Angels, it resembles angelical Purity. What Name shall I give you that is worthy of you ? Shall I call you heavenly

men

*Sap. 4. 1.*  
The Encos-  
miums of  
chastity from  
the Scripture  
and Fathers.  
*Ecdi. 26. 20.*

*Ep. ad Frat.*  
*de mont. Dei.*

*Apo. 14. 4.*

Men, or earthly Angels? For though you live upon Earth; your conversation is in Heaven. Of such is understood that of the *Apocalypse*; *These are they, which were not defil'd with Women; for they are Virgins. These were bought from among women, the First fruits to God and the Lamb; and in their mouth there was found no Ly. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he shall go. For they are without Spot before the throne of God.*

*De Inst. Renunc. Lib. 6. cap. 6.*

*Rom. 8. 9.*

In like manner *Cassian* assures us, that no Vertue renders us so like to Angels as Chastity, by the help of which we live in Bodies, yet so, as if we carry'd into Flesh about us, being now transform'd by it into Spirit; according to these words of *S. Paul*: *You live no longer in Flesh, but in Spirit.* And in this we are superiour to the Angels themselves, who being Incorporeal, it is no wonder they live pure and spotless: But for us to do so, it certainly deserves far greater admiration; that Man in this frail and mortal Body, which continually wars against the Spirit, should live as if he had no Flesh about him, and that being Man, he should be in a manner no Man. All the other Holy Fathers likewise give wonderful *Encomiums* of this divine Vertue.

*Ep. ad Tolos. Lib. de Virgin.*

*De virt. Monach.*

*De Hab. Virg. L. 1. de Virg.*

*S. Martial* calls it an excellent and perfect degree, and most like to angelical Purity. *S. Athanasius* says, it is an indefinite Treasure, a never decaying Garland, the Temple of God, the Habitation of the Holy Ghost, a most precious Jewel, the joy of Prophets, the glory of Apostles, the life of Angels, and the crown of Saints. *S. Sulpitius*, that Nothing is to be compar'd to Virginitie. *S. Cyrill* calls it an Angelical crown, and a perfection more than Humane. *S. Cyprian* says, that Virgins are the most worthy part of the Flock of Christ. And *S. Ambrose*, that it is no marvel; if Virgins are compar'd to Angels, who are marry'd to the Lord of Angels. *S. Gregory Nazianzen* says also of the Virgins

gins life, Is it not truly an Angelical thing, for one that is ty'd to the bonds of the Flesh, not to live according to the Flesh, but to be more eminent than Nature itself? I conclude with *S. Hierom* who says, It is a point of great Faith, and of great Vertue, to be the most pure Temple of God, and to offer ourselves wholly as an Holoeauſt to our Lord, and to be according to the words of the Apoſtle, *Holy both in Body and Soul.*

Our holy Founder desirous to hold the same course, and mindful of the advice which *S. Paul* gives to the *Theſſaloni- ans*, *This is the will of God, that you become holy, that you abstain from all uncleanness, and that every one of you keep your Body undefil'd and intire; for God has not call'd us to Impurity, but to Sanctity;* strictly enjoyns all his Followers the same Evangelical Vertue; yea, requires of them the most refin'd Purity that may be imagin'd or practis'd by Mortal men. For not content to have remov'd from us, by the general vow of Chastity, all venereal Acts and Thoughts, and all the Occasions thereof, both near and remote; but he go's further, and says:

1. *Theſſ.* 4. 3.

§. II. *I strictly command all the Brethren, that they have no suspected Company or Counsel of Women.* ] No conversation, entertainment, discourses, instructions, advice, or correspondence with them, either by letters, words, or actions; not only such as are in themselves sinful or libidinous, or are the occasion thereof; but likewise those, which although they be without harm and free from all Uncleaness, as to what regards the Brethrens own particulars; yet may be a just or probable occasion of Suspicion of evil in others. In such sort, that by virtue of this Precept, we are bound not only to shun an Active scandal against Chastity, to wit in our own selves; but also a Passive, that is, that we neither say or do any thing, which may give a just occasion of scan-

*Look not on every body for beauty sake: And among Women tarry not. For out of Garments comes forth the Moth, and from a Woman the iniquity of a Man. Eccli. 42. 12. What kind of chastity are Friers-Monks oblig'd to.*

dal

dal or suspicion of us to others of Impurity, however innocent such actions and words may be, as to what regards our own selves. So pure, so sublime and angelical ought our Chastity to be, not only in our own eyes, but also in those of our Beholders. And therefore it is not here sufficient to excuse us from trespassing against this Precept, either to justify our Comportment, or to alledge, or even to prove our Innocency. It is enough that the nature of the Action in itself, or the Circumstances attending it, be such as commonly are wont to give a just occasion or cause of the Suspicion of impurity to any indifferent person, though in effect there should be none on our sides.

From hence it follows, that the frequent conversation and company of Women is much more dangerous to *Frier-Minors*, than to other Religious. Because, besides that it diversly exposes us to the temptations of the Flesh; it likewise makes us liable to the Censures of others, which by this precept of our Rule we are particularly bound to avoid. And for that reason it ought to be as carefully manag'd, and with as much circumspection as may be possible, and no ways to be practis'd but upon very urgent and weighty occasions, and in necessary affairs of Conscience. This is what our holy Founder would have us understand, when he says: " Truly  
 „ all discourse whatsoever with a Woman is frivolous and  
 „ vain trifling, except in Confession, or in giving her some  
 „ very short Instruction, as far forth as her Salvation, or  
 „ Civility may require. For I beseech you, what business  
 „ can a Religious man have with a Woman, unless it be  
 „ when she religiously asks holy Penance, or Advice for  
 „ reforming her life? Wherefore let those Confessors here  
 answer for themselves, who not content to converse with  
 this Sex, all the morning long in their Confessionals; but  
 likewise after dinner give their Attendance abroad. After the  
 tediousness

*Opusc. Tom. 3.  
 Collat. 6.*

*The practice  
 of some Con-  
 fessors tax'd.*

tediousness of a mornings Confession in the Church, able to tire the most patient, they must needs forsooth in the afternoon make visits to their Devotes at their houses, and there spin out discourses and eternal prattle. Such services and diligence must be us'd to a slight Conscience, as if it were a huge Common-wealth. One cannot suppose that these Entertainments are all of God, who is more honour'd by Silence. One would hardly believe a Soul should need so much polishing, which appears not to be so very refin'd in the knowledge of things divine. One thinks this devout Creature through superabundance of Charity, bears all the sins of the Family; another, that she tells all the tales in the City; and those who easily suspect what themselves do without difficulty, imagine there are other Ties betwixt such Penitents and their Confessors, that are not altogether Spiritual.

If my Reader be one of these, I pray him to consider, that the better a thing is in the Esteem of the world, the more the least Defect in it is taken notice of. This is most of all verifi'd in Chastity, which contains within itself a greater delicacy than other Vertues do, and consequently sooner suffers a prejudice. Wherefore a holy Man very fitly compar'd Chastity to a Looking-glass, which is dull'd by the least breath, as this Vertue is in like manner sully'd by the least offence, and quite loses its lustre. Hence it is, that we ought to be very careful in preserving its beauty, by diligently avoiding every thing, from which we may apprehend any danger. A Flame leaves always more or less some mark behind it where it has been, and though it do's not burn, yet it blackens the place in which it was. In the same manner, some things though they do not burn us, yet they blacken us, for as much as they create in our Souls black and cloudy thoughts; as we find by experience, the frequent conversation and company of Women, even the most chaste and religious,

Chastity a  
Lilly soon  
sully'd.

is



is wont to do. And therefore no body must trust himself in this case, nor presume that he can go so far and no further without danger. For how can any man be secure of this? Since the least thought is able to carry him further than he is aware of. When we walk upon slippery ground, we go very softly, and endeavour to pass only to such a determinate place; notwithstanding the weight of our body, and the slipperiness of the ground, often carries us further than we design'd. So fares it with us in the business of Chastity, every step we make in the presence of Women, is upon slippery ground, and the corruption of Nature clogs and hangs so heavy upon us, that it easily carries us beyond our Mark. In fine, Chastity is so delicate and nice a Vertue, that the least thing wounds it, and therefore we ought to be extremely cautious of exposing it to the least danger. *This is the rich*

2. Cor. 4. 7.

*Treasure which we carry in earthen Vessels, which if once broken, all is lost. For which cause our holy Founder was wonderful nice and circumspect herein, and fear'd nothing so much as the sight of a Woman; as appear'd, when being ask'd by one of his Companions, Why he would not so much as cast an eye upon a certain noble Damick, who with much charity and humility assisted him in his Sickness, he made this answer; Who would not fear* „ (said he) „ a Spouse of Christ? To whom if we preach „ with modest and down-cast eyes, we confirm her in her „ Chastity. Let her look me in the face as she pleases, but „ I not her. Following herein the counsel of the Wise Man: „ *Behold not a Virgin, lest perhaps thou be scandaliz'd in her beauty.*

Opusc. Tom. 3.  
Apotheg. 33.

Eccli. 9. 5.

O God of my heart, the God of all purity and sanctity! I humbly acknowledge that I cannot continue Chast without your special favour, for this Vertue is a pure gift of your Goodness; and therefore be graciously pleas'd to preserve it in me, and take from

from me all occasions of offending you herein. And you O blessed Lady, immaculate Virgin and Mother of the God of purity! receive my Soul and Body into your protection. I deposite this precious Treasure in your hands to keep for me; that I may not lose it whilst my Duty obliges me to converse with persons of the other Sex. For I resolve to dye a thousand Deaths, rather than violate the Promise I made your blessed Son in the presence of you and of the whole Celestial Court, on the day of my Profession.

§. III. For the clearer understanding of the precedent text Note: That Suspicion or suspected Company or Counsel of women is rationally gather'd. 1. If the Place be solitary, unus'd; or obscure. 2. If it be in the Night, or at an unreasonable Hour. 3. If the Persons be alone without witness. 4. If their Gestures be dissolute and loose, and the Parties approach too nigh one to the other. 5. If their Looks be over much fix'd and too intent. 6. If their Words be wanton, or of a double meaning, although they may be understood in a good sense. 7. Also taking by the Hand, dissolute Laughter and the like. 8. Meeting in places frequently appointed, and often conversing with the other Sex without a just cause. 9. The Age likewise, the Condition of the persons, and Prohibition of Superiours do aggravate the Suspicion. 10. Often interchanging of Letters, or presenting of Tokens. For Holy love, says *S. Hierom*, acknowledges no such things; neither Hand-kerchiefs, nor Garters, nor Nose-gays, nor Cloaths apply'd to the mouth, nor Meats tasted and presented, nor indearing Epistles, or any other such like Attractives. And according to these signs, as the Occasion of suspicion given or the Cause to suspect their evil intentions, (though perhaps as I said in themselves innocent) is more or less; so is the Transgression of this precept in a *Frier - Minor* greater or lesser. Besides that it is against the natural and divine Law, which obliges us to take care of our Reputation, and not to scandalize our Neighbour.

The tokens  
or marks of  
suspected  
Company.

*Hier. ad Nepot.*

The danger  
of womens  
Company.

Ecdes. 7. 27.

Prov. 6. 27.

Ecdes. 9. 11.

§. IV. My Reader must not wonder, if our holy Founder has shew'd himself something severe in this matter; since it is a Point so nice and full of danger, that the wisest of men taught by experience could say: *I have found that a Woman is more bitter than Death; who is the snare of Hunters, and her Heart is a net, her Hands are bands. He that pleases God, will avoid her.* And in his Proverbs: *Can a Man hide fire, says he, in his bosom, that his Garments burn not? Or walk upon hot coals, that his Soles be not burnt? So he that goes into his Neighbours Wife, shall not be clean when he shall touch her.* And Ecclesiasticus: *Her Communication burns as Fire.* S. Bonaventure in the Treatise he compos'd of the purity of Confession says, The testimonies of mutual affections which one Sex renders to another, are infinitely able to inkindle Love. And S. John Climachus assures us, That they who are most retir'd, fail not to feel domestick wars; but such as indifferently expose themselves to objects, are violently both within and without assaulted. The beauty and handsomness of one Sex is a secret poison to the other, which entering in by the Eyes, makes a strange kind of havock in the Soul. It falls into our Heart ere we are aware, not perceiv'd nor foreseen, and in the beginning causes some slight touch, which according as it is entertain'd distends itself, and is in such sort multiply'd, that it replenishes the whole capacity of the Soul with arrows and chain-links, which we cannot but with much labour dissolve and unloose. The Spirit which before rested in a generous liberty, becomes Captive. This imperious Visage perpetually knocks at the gate of our Heart. It enters into recreation, game, study, repose, repast, sleep, and action. It insinuates itself into Prayer with distractions pleasingly troublefom, it busies the thoughts, it exercises the discourse, it inflames the desire, to go, to visit, to speak;

it replenishes the memory with what is past, and the imagination with the present and the future. I do not wonder, that the Scripture compares it to a *Panther*, a savage and cruel Beast, which with her teeth tears those she has amuz'd with the mirrour-like spots of her skin, and drawn to her by the sweet exhalation of her body. It is more to be fear'd, said an Ancient, than the horns of the Bull, the teeth of the Lion, the gall of the Aspick, yea than Fire and Flames. *S. Ephraim* thought it was as easy to live among burning Coals, as to converse with this Sex, and not to wound the Soul. And *S. Bernard*, that to be always among Women without hurt, was to do more than to raise the Dead. *S. Cyprian* imagin'd it was to erect a Precipice, to be addicted to such Society. *S. Hierom* advis'd, that we should either equally love them all, or equally not know them. The holy Abbot of mount *Sinai* apprehended so much danger from them, that he could say, had not God given woman Shamefac'dness, which is the scabbar'd wherein this Sword is kept, there would be no Salvation in the world. And *S. Basil* says, that a Man who perpetually converses with Women, and says he feels not any touch thereof, participates not at all of Humane nature, but rather is some extraordinary Prodigy. For as he learnedly disputes in the book he compos'd of Virginitie, the Body of a woman is as it were a section and a fragment of that of the First man; which is the cause he naturally desires her, as a Part taken from himself. The Palm has not more inclination to the Palm, nor Iron to the Adamant, than one Sex has towards another. Add, that after the corruption of Sin, we have in us an evil Source of carnal desire, which flows from the bottom of our Soul by our five Senses, as by so many Conduit-pipes. Nature is extremely subtle and busy, and when one has a hundred times together by strong hand chas'd it away, a hundred times it

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returns.

returns. It insinuates itself, it presses forward with sweet violence, with charming sweetneses; it insensibly spins its web, and do's what it lists almost in spite of us. Judge then, how just cause our Seraphical Founder had for abstracting his Followers, as much as possibly he might from the society and familiarity of Women, to preserve in them this so precious jewel of Chastity kept in such frail Vessels.

*My Sister Spouse is a Garden inclos'd, a Garden inclos'd, a Fountain seal'd up. Cant. 4. 12. Thou shalt not come in here. 1. Paral. 11. 5.*

*In what cases may the Brethren enter into Monasteries.*

S. V. *And that they Enter not into the Monasteries.]* Cloisters, Gardens, Work-houses, Dormitories, and other places within the Inclosure or where the Religious are us'd to come. *Of Nuns.]* Of whatsoever Order they are, if they profess a Rule approv'd by the Church, and lead a regular Inclos'd life. *Enter not into* he says: For the Brethren, unless otherwise prohibited by some Command, Ordination or Satute, may upon any reasonable and religious motive, as hearing Confessions, Preaching, Begging, &c. *come so*, without any prejudice to this Text, and frequent the Churches, Speak-houses, Grates, and other Places of the said Monasteries that are out of the Inclosure.

*Except such as have a special Licence from the Apostolical See.]* As all those have, who go in upon urgent and necessary Occasions. For example, when the Monastery is on fire to quench it; when Souldiers or Thieves are to be driven out, the Sick to be help'd, the Sacraments to be administred, Mass to be said, Visits to be made, a Dying person to be assisted, a Corps to be bury'd; or infine any other thing Corporal or Spiritual necessarily to be perform'd by the Brethren within the precincts of the Monastery. In all which and the like Cases, a special Licence is granted to the Brethren by the holy See, upon certain Conditions express'd in the Popes Bulls; which are strictly to be observ'd, if we will not transgress our Rule. Some of the principal whereof are, not to go in Alone, or remain there separate from your Companion,

Companion, or stay longer then Necessity requires, &c.

Here observe, that the most prudent and zealous Fathers of the Order, have from its first institution ever declin'd taking under their charge the care of Monasteries, mov'd with the consideration of the great danger which such Employments expose us to of transgressing this Precept of our holy Rule, in having to do daily with Nuns; whom the Devil very often, says *Hugo de Dina* upon this Text, assaults more violently than he do's other Women; and for that also the Scandal is greater, and the Crime more enormous. This is a pious zeal in itself very commendable, in as much as it is a strong Rampire for securing us from being attack'd by our Enemy; aslikewise for that it is conform to the intention of our holy Founder, who was always very much averse from undertaking such Charges, as may be seen in our Annals, being often heard to say: *I fear lest God having taken Wives from us, the Devil in place of them do not procure us Sisters.* And was displeas'd with his disciple Brother *Philip Long*, for having accepted the office of Visitor of the *Poor Clares*, which were then all under the direction of the *Cistercian Monks*, except the Monastery of *S. Damian*. Notwithstanding for the good of religion, the Order since that has been oblig'd in compliance to the Church's commands, to take these Charges upon them; which are therefore cheerfully to be imbrac'd by our Confessors, when injoin'd them by Obedience; though to be manag'd with a great deal of reserve, circumspection and prudence, if they desire in earnest to preserve the Purity they have promis'd to God; and therefore let it please them in all occurrences of their Administration, constantly to bear in mind this advice of the Wise Man: *Hast thou Daughters? Keep their Body, and shew not thy Countenance merry towards them.*

The Order formerly had not the charge of Nuns Souls.

Wadding. ad. an. 1219.

Ecclesi. 7. 26.

S. VI. Neither let them be God-fathers of Men or Women.]

The reason.

Why FF.MM.  
are forbid to  
be God-Fa-  
thers.

We be to that  
Man by whom  
Scandal comes.  
Math. 18. 7.

Serm. 98.  
ad Soror.

Author Reg.  
Monach. apud  
Hier. cap. 20.

*men.* ] To any Children at their Baptism or Confirmation. So to avoid taking upon them the obligation of their Instruction, or to contract thereby any particular Familiarity and Friendship with their Parents, to the prejudice of their own, or of their Brethrens spiritual Functions; the peace and tranquillity whereof, the daily care of Children, and the too free access of their and their Parents to our Convents on that account, would greatly interrupt and disturb; and besides, be the occasion of an infinite number of other disorders in a Community. All which our holy Founder is desirous here to prevent. *Lest by this occasion there arise Scandal among the Brethren, or of the Brethren.* ] Lest the Brethren be scandaliz'd or offended at one another, or others be scandaliz'd at them, by reason of too frequent conversation and familiarity with Women proceeding from such Offices, which would be the utter ruine and destruction of our vow of Chastity. For as *S. Bernard* observes, Familiarity very often overthrows those whom Vice could not hurt, and such as the Tickling of the flesh could not master, Affinity has subdu'd. Which made the Author of the Monks Rule to say: That the words of *Filiation* and *Maternity*, which Males and Females use under a spiritual colour, are cunning devices of the Devil and marks of eternal Death. And he there gives the reason thereof: Because, says he, a Woman how vertuous and holy soever she be, if she converse much with one of the other Sex though never so spiritual, by a certain instinct of Nature is inclin'd to wickedness, if strength and grace be wanting in the Man.

Out of all this it appears, what strict obligations we *Frier-Minors* are under in matter of Chastity, beyond other Religious; being bound under Mortal sin, to shun not only the evil and the occasion of evil, but even the very Suspicion thereof. And likewise how very sollicitous our holy Founder

Founder has been to keep us from trespassing in this kind.  
 1. By forbidding us all suspect company of Women in general. 2. Of Nuns in particular. 3. By taking from us all familiarity and friendship with Seculars, under pretence of spiritual Affinity. Thus carefully providing us of a triple Bulwark against the efforts of our Enemy.

O most pure and immaculate Lamb of God ! which feedest among Lillies, for it is thy pleasure to converse with Chast Souls. Adorn mine, I most humbly beseech thee, with this three-fold Chastity ; to the end thou may'st deign to inhabit therein. And do thou, O my Soul, seeing thou art such a lover of Delights, courageously renounce the vile pleasures of the Flesh, to enjoy those of the Spirit ; that rendring thyself pure and undefil'd, thou may'st be worthy to accompany the Lamb wheresoever he go's.

§. VII. But (dear Brethren) to secure and fortify ourselves still more against the Attempts of this loose and wanton spirit of Impurity, which now-a-days to the weeping eyes of Chastity leads the greatest part of Mankind into a most shameful and miserable Servitude, I will here in this place present you with some other Considerations very effectual for the same purpose, conform to our holy Founder's intention and design ; which you may weigh at your leisure, while you are out of danger, and free from the surprizals of this brutish Passion, which has neither Eyes nor Ears when once it comes to assault you.

1. The first thing I advise you, is seriously to consider that one cannot be Chast, but by a most singular gift from God ; and therefore it is necessary to have a particular recourse to the most blessed Trinity, which according to *S. Gregory of Nazianzen* is the first of Virgins ; humbly beseeching it, by the intercession of the most pure among Creatures, and by the mediation of your Angel-guardian, of *S. Francis* and all the Saints of the Order, to deliver you from the reproaches of the Spirit of Impurity ; in such sort that you may pass your

Twelve Remedies against Impurity.

*I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, unless God gave it. Sap. 8. 21.*



your life Innocently, and it may become inaccessible to the pollutions of the Flesh. The world was never so beautiful, so gentle, nor so squarely dispos'd; bodies, apparel, garb, civil behaviour, compliment, wit, merriment, entertainments, feasts, liberty, conversation, and great confidence; all we hear, all we see, all we smell, all we taste, all we touch in so great effeminacy of Life, seems to be made to persecute Purity. There is neither Age, Sex, nor Profession secure from *Cupids* darts. Snares are laid on every side; there is not almost a Stone where some Scorpion sleeps not; there is not a place where Concupiscence do's not spread some Net to intrap us. It fights against ourselves, it sets reason to sale, makes use of our members, as the Instruments of its battels and the Organs of its wiles. There is sedition within, and war without, and never any repose but by the singular grace of God. It is a strange thing, that *this Fury* has a thousand hands, and a thousand attractives, a thousand ways of working quite different, and many times opposite. It takes by the eyes, by the ears, by the imagination, by chance, of purpose, by flying, pressing forward, honouring, insulting, by complacence, by disdain. Sometimes also it lays hold by tears, by laughing, by modesty, and by audacity, by confidence, by carelessness, by wiles, by simplicity, by speech, and by silence. Sometimes it assails in company, sometimes in solitude, at windows, at grates; sometimes at church, at prayers, in confessionals and acts of penance. And who can secure us against it without the assistance of Heaven?

Whosoever  
shall see a  
Woman to  
lust after her,  
he has already  
committed Adultery with

2. I advise you, never to stay the least upon thoughts and imaginations of things Dishonest; but so soon as they present themselves, presently to chase them away, and extinguish them in your heart, no otherwise than you would quench a burning hot Iron in a fountain. I say, in your Heart:

Heart : for to what purpose is it to be chaste in your Members, and be in Thought an adulterer ? Many kick not to entertain love in their Imagination , with frequent desires , without putting them in Execution ; but they should consider , that Love though imaginary , makes not an imaginary Hell , and for a transitory smoke they purchase an everlasting fire.

3. To mortify your Senses , which are most commonly the fore-runners of sin ; and above all to restrain your Eyes , which according to the opinion of *S. Isidore*, are the dishes , wherein Luxury serves up the viands of voluptuousness ; they are the windows , the allurements , the snares , the conduits of Love ; it buds in the Eyes , that it may at leisure blossom in the Heart. And therefore it is fit to stand upon your guard with so subtle and vigorous a Sense , which often fills the Soul with appetites , and flames. As for the Ears , there is no doubt they may serve as handles for Love , and that it has taken many that way. An evil word has fingers to incite the Flesh. He who hears it , and he who willingly speaks it , is not innocent before God. Smelling blasts Chastity , and the Taste roughly assaults it ; but Kisses , and unchaste Touches cut her throat.

4. Learn how seasonably you may know yourself , by considering your own temperature , your humours , the inclinations of your mind , judgement , courage. Behold the part wherein you are the most sensible , and where you give most access to your Enemy to tempt you. Endeavour to fortify yourself that way , and the more inability you therein find , use the more precaution. If you be weak , fear nothing but your infirmity ; and if you be strong , fear all , yea even your own safety. Sometimes the Seasons of age , which might seem more to propend to Lust , are peaceful and calm enough ; in our Bodies there is a Spring-tide in Winter , to become af-

Rrr

terward

her in his  
heart. *Math.*  
5. 29.

*I have made a  
covenant with  
mine Eyes, that  
I might not so  
much as think  
of a Virgin.*  
*Job. 31. 1.*

*He that thinks  
himself to stand  
let him take  
heed lest he fall*  
*1. Cor. 10. 12.*  
*Blessed is the  
Man, that is  
always fear-  
ful. Prov. 28.*  
*24.*

terward a Winter in the Spring-tide. Youth transported by other purposes, or with-held by a serious education, is quiet enough, and riper Years fall into the most stormy part of the Tempest. It has happen'd to divers to converse many years with a contrary Sex, and never to have felt any touch, for which they have enter'd into a strong confidence that serv'd for a Bait in the peril, which had spar'd them in a thousand occasions, the more notably to ruin them in one sole accident.

*Pride go's before Humiliation; and thoughtfulness of mind is a fore-runner of our ruine. Prov. 16. 18.*

5. Above all, take heed of Pride. For the most illuminated Fathers have observ'd, that God oft-times permits arrogant Spirits to fall into Carnal sins, to abate the fierceness of their Courage by the sensible ignominy of the stains of Luxury. And this is so proper to quail the exorbitance of human Arrogance, that God made use of this counterpoise to humble *S. Paul* in the height of his Revelations. Pardon not yourself any thing, no not so much as the Shadow of this sin; but only excuse such as fall through some notable surprize, or pitiful frailty. Think, if you have not experienc'd the like falls, you are beholding to the goodness of God, rather than to any merit of your own. Presume not at all of your strength or integrity; but resolve with yourself, that the presumption of ones own power makes up the moiety of Impudency.

*7. Confuse thy body, and bring it under subjection. 1. Cor. 9. 27.*

*Idleness has*

6. Be not likewise transported with extravagancies, animosities, and revenge: Since Anger and Love, according to the Ancients, work upon one Subject, and that the same fervours of blood which make men revengeful, will make them unchast. Fail not to heal yourself by the practice of retirement, of hair-cloath, disciplines, fasting, watching, labour, harsh and rough apparel; for the Weakness of flesh by little and little cuts the sinews of Passions, which are inherent in the flesh. Take in hand some active employment, which

ves not leisure to the wild fancies of the mind. It is the superfluous excess of Idleness, which dissolves your heart into these Effeminacies. You were better have some mischievous Process against you, than all these trifling Entertainments. Frame some good employment to free yourself from a bad. Remember what is said; when one has no leisure to Live, he has no leisure to Love. Take also to your assistance in time of Temptation, some Angel Guardian, some man of God, some prudent Director; resign yourself up wholly to his advice, he will draw you out from the fire of *Gomorrha*, to place you in refreshment and safety on the Mountain of the living God. There are some who expect a good smart Sickness, and many Blood-lettings, which may evacuate all the blood imprinted with the Images of the thing beloved, and take away their proud flesh to make a new Body. Others are cur'd by contempt, disdain, a quarrel, ambition, an office, a new state of life &c. One would not believe how many humane Industries there are to cure the pain of Love; but ever it is better to owe ones health to the Fear of God, to Penance, to Devotion, than to all other inventions whatsoever. The memory of Death, Judgement, Hell and Heaven, the assiduity of Prayer, the frequentation of Sacraments, often invocation of the Mother of purity, and the Angels Guardians of chastity, daily blunt a thousand and a thousand Arrows shot against chaste Hearts.

7. Consider the glorious Battels, which so many Heroick Souls have wagg'd to crush this Serpent, and to walk with noble steps in the liberty of the Children of God. Some have fought with it on Thorns, as *S. Benner*: others on Flowers, as the Martyr *Nicetas*, who being bound on a bed of Roses with silken Cords, to resign himself to the love of a Courtesan, spit out his Tongue in her face: Others have thrust sharp pointed Reeds under their nails, as *S. John the Good*:

R r r if Others

*taught much  
Wickedness.  
Eccli. 23. 28.*

*If thou posses  
a Friend, in  
Temptation  
possess him.  
Eccli. 6. 7.*

Others have quench'd it in Snows, as our holy Father *S. Francis*: Others in Flames, as *S. Martinian*, who, being by an unchast Woman solicited to sin, burnt his face and hands, to overthrow the strongest Passion, by the most violent Pain. There are many of them in the new Christianity of *Japonia*, who pursue the same ways, and run to their Chimney-hearths to vanquish the temptations of the Flesh, thinking there is not a better remedy against this fire, than fire itself. Others have overcome this brutishness by a savage life, as *S. Theoclista*, who, being taken by *Arabians*, stole from them, and was thirty years hidden in the Forrests, living on grass, and cloathing herself with leaves. To say truly, there is not any Vertue has cost Mankind so much, as the vertue of Chastity.

*Fly Fornica-*  
*tion. 1. Cor. 6.*  
*18.*

8. Flight from Occasions, is a most assured Bulwark in this warfare, and who can carry himself well herein, shall be much stronger by Flying, than were Conquerors in the bravest Battels; a Retreat in this, being as honourable as Victory. For all that which cherishes your Malady, is the Presence of the object. Our Passions resemble Ecchoes: Do you not see, that Ecchoes, the further you go from them, the less repercussion there is, they lessening, and losing themselves in the air? This Affection, that speaks so loud by reflexion of the Countenance which you daily behold with so much contentment, will quickly vanish by a little Absence. Comets, which (as it is said) are fed by vapours of the earth, are maintain'd whilst their Mother furnishes them with food: So Love, which shines and burns like a false Star in the bottom of your Heart, continually takes it sustenance and substance from the Face which you behold with so much admiration, from the Conversation which entertains you in an enchanted Palace, full of chains and charms. Believe me unloose this Charm, take yourself off, dispute not  
any

any longer with your Concupiscence; fly away, cut the cable, weigh anchor, spread sails, set forward, go, fly. Oh how much care will quickly be pass'd over! Oh a thousand times will you bless the hour of this Resolution! Look for no more Letters, regard not Pictures; no longer preserve Favours; let all be to preserve your Reason. Ah! why argue you still with your own thoughts? Is an Absence so troublefom, that to avoid it you must torture your Body, vilify your Spirit, and yield your Reputation up as a prey to Slander? Make a little resistance, cast away all these little Urchins, which afflict you. You shall no sooner put the Wedge into the Block, but it shall be done; you shall have a Soul victoriously elevated over Passion, which shall rejoyce amidst the Trophies thereof.

9. The Stone of offence and scandal to many, is, that they lively represent to their imagination the Sweetness of sin, and never consider the Bitterness that comes after it. As soon as a man is plung'd in the puddle thereof, behold a blushing Soul, drench'd in pensiveness, melancholy, and despair, whom loathsom Pleasure, which passes away as a Dream, furnishes from a dream with a heap of scorns, sorrows, and confusions: Whereas quite contrary, that Soul which has resisted, finds herself content, joyful, satisfy'd with holy comforts, which come from the paradise of God. Few men revolve this thought, which *S. Cyprian* much recommends. Behold why the number of those that fall into the Mire is very great! And yet notwithstanding do's is not seem to you very reasonable, that a man, who a thousand times has yielded to Temptation, should once in his lifetime tast the Sweetness, which is in the victory over a Temptation, to rejoyce for ever?

10. Many have been diverted from a great and manifest Precipice, by considering these words: Well, go to, to yield

to

to Carnal Love, what will be the end thereof? To purchase Repentance at a dear a rate: To render up a Renown of so many years, as a prey to one unhappy moment of Pleasure: To commit a Sacrilege, and offer a personal Affront to the high and puissant Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, dishonouring thereby the self same specifical Nature, which God has exalted even to God. Where are your Vows? Where is the Faith promis'd to God? Let us at least seek out some place where he is not. And where is he not? So many Stars, so many Intelligences, wherewith the world is replenish'd, are so many Eyes to behold thee in the most remote and darkeſt Retirement. Himself looks into the bottom of thy Conscience. Ask leave of him, if thou wilt sin. But how ask, and how obtain? Exercise a little patience, and this Temptation will vanish away as a Cloud. Thou go'st about to commit a sin, the pardon whereof is very uncertain; but, it is doubtless, through all Eternity, when thou hast committed it, God himself cannot make it to be undone.

*Grace is deceitful, and Deceiveth man.  
Prov. 31. 30.*

11. Represent to yourself very often in your thoughts the vanity and illusion of worldly Loves. Verily, all well consider'd, the Play is not worth the Candle. Must you inflict so many pains upon your Body, so many torments on your Mind, lose so much Time, make so many ill Tongues talk, to please I know not what petty, wicked, and founder'd Delire, which you know not what it is, nor to what it tends? If you knew many times what you desir'd, you would be asham'd of yourself, you would have cause to be amaz'd, that so noble a Spirit should suffer itself to be transported with such follies. The notable *Raymond Lullius*, who passionately was enamour'd of a Lady, wife, and honest, when purposely to cure his frenzy, she shew'd him one of her Breasts eaten and gnaw'd through with a Canke, and

and extremely hideous to behold : *Say, simple Man, said she, see what you lov'd.* He, at that instant coming to himself, spake : *Alas ! was it for this I lost so many good hours, that I burn'd, became immur'd, that I pass'd through Fire and Water.* All Lovers would say the like, were the Scarf taken from their face. They would see the insufficiency, levity, inconstancy, treachery of Creatures, which they most fervently love.

Good God, how watched are those loves of things Visible ! since they idolatrise a little skin. The Carnal man, who daily crucifies himself upon so many Crosses, as he entertains thoughts for the Creature he loves, is taken by the Eye, with a little exterior skin, call'd by the Physicians *Epidermis* : Pull that away from this Body, which gives him so many Martyrdoms, he would think that a Monster, he now adores for a Goddess. Is not this a strange weakness of Judgment, and must we not confess the Eyes so inflam'd in their pursuits, are very scanty in their fruition, reserving to themselves no other object, than thin colours, which put upon them so many illusions, to occasion so many flames ? Besides, what is temporal Beauty, at the best, but a transitory charm, an illusion of senses, a voluntary imposture, a slave of pleasure, a bait and instrument to sin, a flower which has but a moment of life, a dial on which we never look but whilst the Sun shines upon it, a superficial grace which hides under the smooth delicacy of the Skin leathern stretches. So with their poison charming the drunken Senses ? What is humane Beauty, but a Dung-hill cover'd with snow, a Glass painted with false colours, a Prey pursued by many dogs, a dangerous Hostess in a frail house, a sugar'd hemlock in a feast, which some dare not touch for Respect, and others gourmandize through Sensuality ? Go, well to so fading a good ; Go, betake you to so unhappy a snare ;



snare ; Go, ty your contentments to so slippery a knot : What will else happen to you but to court a Fancy, which loosening your hold, will leave you nothing but the sorrow of your illusions ? If Beauties must be lov'd, let us love them in the state wherein they shall never cease to be Beauties ; let us love them in the glory of their Resurrection, where they shall be plac'd as Queens on their Thrones.

*He is led as an Ox to be a Victim, and as a Lamb playing the Wanton, and not knowing that he is drawn as a Fool to bonds, till the Arrow pierce his Liver : As if a Bird should make haste to the Snare, and knows not that his Life is in danger. Eccli. 7. 22.*

12. The last Preservative of Chastity, which I purpose to present you, is the consideration of the miserable State of a man unhappily caught in the gins of Carnal Love. Observe one violently transfix'd therewith, and you shall see a man, whose Mind is bewitch'd, Brain dislocated, and Reason eclips'd. All he beholds, all he meditates, all he speaks, all he dreams, is the Creature he loves. He has her in his head and heart, painted, grav'd, carv'd in all the most pleasing forms. For her, he sometimes enters into quakings, sometimes into faintings, another while into fits of fire and ice. He fly's in the Air, and instantly is drench'd in the Abyss : He attends, he espies ; he fears, he hopes, he despairs, he groans, he sighs, he blushes, he waxes pale : His eyes become hollow, colour wan, body weak, blood inflam'd : He dotes in the best company, he talks to woods and fountains ; He writes, he blots out, he tears, he lives like a Ghost estrang'd from the conversation of Men : Repast is irksom to him ; and Repose, which charms all the cares of the world, is not made for him. Still this Fair one, still this Cruel one torments him, and God makes him a Whip of the thing he most loves.

It is to deceive, to say that Love excludes all other Passions ; it awakens them, and garboils them, and makes them all wait on it. It causes Aversion, Hatred, Jealousy, Envy, Hope, Sadness, Despair, Anger, Mirth, Tears, Scorn, Grief, Songs, and Sighs. And as it is thought that evil Spir-

rits

its shuffle in storms, to stir up Lightning-flashes, and make the Thunder-stroke the more terrible and pernicious : So is it likewise true, that the Angel of darkness involves himself in these great tempests of Love, many times making use of the abominable ministry of *Magicians*, and acts treasons, furies, firings, poisonings, murders, and ransackings. And how should it spare its Enemy, since it is cruel to Itself? It makes some to sink in the twinkling of an eye, drinking their Blood, and insensibly devouring their Members. It confines others to regions of *Hobgoblins* and darkness. It kills and murders those who have the most constantly serv'd it. It sharpen'd the sword which transfix'd *Amnon*. It shav'd and blinded *Sampson*. It caus'd *David's* and *Salomon's* Shipwracks. It has besotted Sages, conquer'd the Mighty, deceiv'd the Prudent, corrupted Saints, humbl'd the Great. It has walk'd on Scepters, perch'd on the lawrels of Victors, thrown trouble into States, schism into Churches, corruption among Judges, and fury into Arms. It has from all times push'd and shoulder'd good order out of the world. It has been the butt and aim of all the vengeance of God. It has been stricken with fire and brimstone from heaven, swallow'd in the entrails of the earth, drench'd in the waters of a general Deluge. Yet it escapes, yet it perpetually armies, yet it wallows itself in blood and slaughter, yet it holds the sword of Justice ever perpendicular over the head, and in conclusion it is esteem'd but as a Sport. O God ! Who is he, that considering all this, would ever betray his Soul, Heaven and his God, to yield obedience to loathsome Lust?

Fly then, dear Brethren, this fleshly Pestilence of mankind with all your might, and never suffer it to exercise its tyranny over Hearts consecrated by the precious blood of the Lamb. Will ye not in your flesh on earth, a Virtue to which Angels ascribe such glory in Heaven, not betray an Eternity

The conclusion, wherein the Brethren, laying aside Carnal Love, are exhorted to the

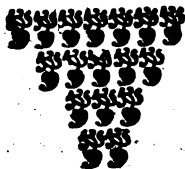
Love of Je-  
sus-Christ.

of blessing for a pleasure so short and wretched. If you will love, carry your Loves to Heaven, and there place them in the Heart of Jesus; who deserves all the Love both of Men and Angels, infinitely amiable as he is, wholly compos'd of desires and satisfactions, and after whom all the just do sigh. Transfer your Affections from the Creature to the Creator, from Visible to Invisible, from Temporal to Eternal, from Error to Truth, from wretched Passion to perfect Charity. And addressing yourselves to this well-beloved of your Hearts, this sweet Spouse of your Souls, Christ Jesus, speak to him after this amorous manner. *I have found him whom my Soul loves : I will hold him fast ; and will not let him go, till I bring him into my Mothers house, and into the chamber of him that bore me. I to my Beloved, and my Beloved to to me, who feeds among Lillies. Let him kiss me with a kiss of his Mouth : Because thy Breasts are better than Wine, smelling fragrantly of the best Ointments. Oil pour'd out is thy Name ; therefore have young Maidens lov'd thee Draw me : We will run after thee in the odour of thine Ointments. O how beautiful art thou my Love, how beautiful art thou ! Thou art all fair, O my Love, and there is not a Spot in thee. If you once begin heartily to love Jesus Christ, all other Loves will vanish into smoke ; you will find you shall think upon him, to the exclusion of all Creatures, almost insensibly every moment ; and, as says S. Gregory, every time you fetch your breath, there will come a pleasing Idea of God to fill your Soul with splendors and affections. You will feel a distast and unsavouriness of Heart against all earthly things ; so that it will seem to you, that the most pleasing Objects of the world are mingl'd with Gall and Worm-wood. You will seek for your Jesus in all Creatures, you will languish after him ; all which bears his Name and Memory will be delightfom to you ; you will speak of him*

cant. l. 2.3.4.

him in all Companies; you will have an earnest desire to see him acknowledg'd esteem'd, and honour'd by all the world. And if you perceive any contempt of his Person, which is so estimable, you will think the Apple of your eye is touch'd. Your Solitude will be in *Jesus*, your Discourse of *Jesus*; *Jesus* will be in your Watchings, and in your Sleep, in your Affairs, in your Recreations; and you will account it a kind of Infidelity and spiritual Fornication, to lose sight of him but for a Moment. And if any painful and harsh accidents are to be undergone for his sake, they will seem to you a Paradise, wounds will be pearls and rubies; maladies, sports; calumnies, blessings; and Death, will be Life.

O God of all holy Affections! Dispose my Soul to form sweet acts of thy sacred Love. Direct me to fix all my desires to thy only Interests. Destroy in me all Selfishness, and cancel all Divertisements to created objects. Who would not love thee, sweet Lord, infinitely amiable as thou art? Thy Beauties are without stain, thy Goodness without reproach, and thy Conversation without importunity. The more I talk thee, the more I incline to love and honour thee. Familiarity with an infinite Being begets no Contempt, but only from those, whom thou do'st despise for their own Faults. Increase in me, I humbly beseech thee, this sense of thy spiritual and solid Sweetness; Wean me, and win me from all disorderly Affections, strengthen me against all the allurements of Sensuality which may defile my Soul. O let not the false pleasures of the Body prevail over my Reason! Let not my Passions ever get the Empire over my Heart, nor fottish Love have any part therein, to dispossess thee of thine own Habitation, where thou do'st so much delight to dwell.



Of those that go among Saracens and other Infidels.

## CHAP. XII.

*Whosoever of the Brethren, by Divine Inspiration, shall be willing to go amongst Saracens and other Infidels, let them ask Leave of their Provincial Ministers. But let the Ministers give Licence to none, but such as they shall see fit to be sent. To these, I enjoyn the Ministers under Obedience; that they ask of our Lord the Pope, one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, for Governour, Protector, and Corrector of this Fraternity; that being always subject and obedient to the sees of the said Holy Roman Church, firm in the Catholick Faith, we may observe the Poverty, and Humility, and Gospel of our Lord Jesus-Christ, which we have firmly promised.*

### THE CONTENTS.

I. What motives our Missioners ought to propose to themselves in going amongst Infidels.

II. That they ought not to go without leave of Superiours.

III. Their Qualifications.

IV. Of the excellency of their Calling.

V. How far they are oblig'd to

the observation of their Rules

VI. Of our English Missioners in particular.

VII. Three dangerous Rocks carefully to be avoided by them.

VIII. Wherein consists the Office of a Cardinal-Protectors, and what advantage the Order derives from the same.

### THE EXPOSITION.

The Spirit of  
the Lord is up-

**W** *Whosoever of the Brethren.] Whether Clerks, or Lay-Brothers. By Divine Inspiration.] Either by*

a manifest and certain Impulse of the Holy Ghost ; or out of some pious and religious Motive , by which the said divine Inspiration may probably be conjectur'd , or reasonably be presum'd ; such as is , an ardent thirst after Martyrdom , an extraordinary zeal of the Salvation of Souls , a vehement desire of propagating the Catholick Faith , &c. accompany'd with Humility , Devotion , Obedience and Submission to Superiours directions ; marks of a divine Spirit : But not out of Levity , Curiosity or a desire to see strange Countries , to enjoy the company of Relations and Acquaintance , to fly Regular Obseivance , or for any other impure Intention , or humane Respect. *Shall be willing to go among Saracens and other Infidels.* ] In order to labour for their Conversion. *Willing* , he says : Because the Holy Ghost counsels , not commands in this case ; and therefore the Brethren , notwithstanding this suggestion of the Spirit of God , are still at liberty to go or not go. But if they shall imbrace this divine motion and desire to go , as I would advise them , then :

*on me ; to preach the Gospel to the Poor he has sent me. Luc. 4. 18.*

S. II. *Let them ask leave of their Provincial Ministers.* ] Without whose , or the General Minister's special licence , ~~who alone are to judge of the truth and sincerity of this Inspiration~~ , it is not lawful for them to go ; it being no true Mission , if they go without being sent by some Higher Power. Besides , it would be a piece of Presumption , and too much confiding in our own forces to undertake so difficult a Task of our own heads ; rashly exposing ourselves thereby to danger , and the Church many times to dishonour , for want of Capacity and due Qualifications. Wherefore let the Brethren ask leave of their Superiours , if they desire to go ; to the end they may have the merit of Obedience , and deserve the divine Protection as well as Inspiration , in all the perillous rencounters and difficult undertakings of the Mission , which are innumerable ; where we in very truth may say with the A-

*Of myself I am not come , but he that is True sent me. Joan. 7. 28.*

postle

2. Cor. II. 23.

The great  
and many  
dangers of  
the Mission.

postle S. Paul: *We are in many more Labours, in Prisons more abundantly, in Stripes above measure, in Deaths often, night and day in the depth of the Sea, in Journeying often, perils of Waters, perils of Thieves, perils of our Nation, perils of Gentiles, perils in the City, perils in the Wilderness, perils in the Sea, perils among false Brethren, in Labour and Misery, in much Watchings, in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often, in Cold and Nakedness; besides those things which are Outwardly, our daily Instances, and the Carefulness of Churches.*

The Indifference we ought to have to the will of our Superiour in what relates to the Mission.

But as we ought not to go without Leave, and be our own Carvers in what concerns the Mission in general; so neither in what relates to any determinate Place, Country, Employment in any particular Mission; but must remain in a holy and religious Indifference, and be equally dispos'd and prepar'd, either to go amongst Infidels or Hereticks, *Turks* or *Jews*, to the *Indies* or to *England*, to live in a Residence or in a Circuit, in Town or Country; without any inclination or desire to one Place more than another, or alledging for excuse want of Health, strength of Body, Capacity, Endowments, &c. Of all which, it is not for the Subject to judge, what ever Inspiration he may seem to have, but for the Superiour, who governs in the place of God; and to whom the Inferiour ought so far to deliver the disposal of himself, as to be assur'd what ever his Superiour orders touching this particular, is that which is most for God's Service, the Salvation of his Neighbour, and his own Good. How many Persons are there in the world, that deprive themselves of their own Satisfaction, to comply with their Friends? How many, who live in Countries remote from their own, and such as agree not with their Health and Constitution, and this only to drive on a poor Livelyhood? How many pass the Seas, as to *Constantinople*, into *Africk*,

to the *Indies*, and for an inconsiderable Gain expose themselves to a thousand shipwracks, fatigues and dangers, running the risk not only of their Health, but of Life itself? What great wonder then, if we who are Religious, should perform for the Love of God, and by Obedience, what men of the World daily do for humane Respects, out of a principle of Friendship, Honour, or some inconsiderable Lucre and temporal Interest? And suppose, you should think in your heart you are not sufficiently Qualify'd for the Post appointed you, that the Indisposition caus'd in you by the air of the Climate you live in makes you unserviceable, and that in another place you could bestow your Labours with more fruit for the service of God, for the conversion of your Relations, &c. Yet for all this, it is better you should remain though Unserviceable where you are, in submitting yourself to the will of your Superiour, than to perform great things in following your own Inclination and Desires. Good religious men find not any peace and satisfaction of mind in hearkning to the dictates of flesh and blood, of sensuality and self-love; nor do they set their Affections upon one Place more than another, but upon God alone; and look upon that Function, and that Place which Obedience appoints them, as the best; because they know, and are assur'd, it is that which the Divine Will has allotted them, in the which they place all their Contentment and Satisfaction.

I said above: *That the Brethren, notwithstanding the suggestion of the Spirit of God, are at liberty to go or not go.* Although this be true, yet it hinders not, but that under other Titles they may be oblig'd to go to the Mission when call'd. First, by virtue of their absolute and illimited vow of Obedience, which extends itself, as was said in its proper place, to all that is Good and Lawful within the latitude of Evangelical Perfection; of which kind an Apostolical Mission

Notwithstanding the liberty of Divine Inspiration, FF. MM. are oblig'd to go to the mission when call'd by Superiours.

for



for the conversion of Souls holds the first rank. And therefore when ever Superiours shall think fit to command them to go among Saracens and other Infidels, they are bound to obey, even with manifest danger of their Lives. As our holy Founder expressly declares in his first Rule, where he says:

1. *Reg. c. 16.* „ Let the Brethren remember, that they have given themselves, and left their Bodies to our Lord *Jesus-Christ*, and „ for the love of him they ought to expose themselves to their „ Enemies, both visible and invisible, for our Lord says: „ He that shall lose his Soul for my sake, shall save it to „ life everlasting. And blessed are they that suffer persecution „ for justice, because theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Besides, the very nature and condition of the Institute of *Frier-Minors* requires it; who, as they make profession of following the Apostles in their Form of life, and of Evangelical Perfection; so likewise in their Apostolical Mission; to whom the whole world was given in charge by our blessed Saviour, when he said to them: *Going out preach the Gospel to every Creature.* And this is it, which our holy

*Marc. 16. 15.*

Founder gave Cardinal *Hugolin* Protector of the Order to understand, in a discourse which he had with him upon this subject. "Our Lord, says he, has sent, *Frier-Minors*, „ not to any Provinces or Nations in particular, but for the „ benefit and salvation of the Souls of the whole World. „ And they are bound to go, not only to the countries „ of the Faithful, but likewise of Infidels and Pagans. „ And again in one of his little Works, which he entitles: *Why are Frier-Minors given to the world?* He answers: "Therefore are *Frier-Minors* given to the world, „ that they may be witnesses and followers both by word „ and deed of *Christ's* great charity, and his desire of the „ Salvation of all Mankind; travelling through the world, „ and preaching no less by Example than by Word, and bringing

*Pisan. l. 2.  
Conform. 6.*

, bringing back Souls redeem'd with his most precious blood,  
 , to the only true Creator, Pastor, and Saviour of Souls.

To all this, I may add the Particular obligation which my Province has to the Mission of *England*, upon the account of our D. College erected for that purpose, and of our Benefactors bestowing their Almshouses, and furnishing us with all conveniencies for our Studies with that design. All which are so many special Ties, besides those general ones alledg'd before, upon our Students to engage them to employ well their time, and not to let slip any opportunity whereby to improve themselves for the Mission, and readily to go when call'd to the Relief of their afflicted Country; which is most justly due from us, as well out of natural Gratitude and Affection, as out of a motive of Religion and Conscience.

O blessed Redeemer of the world! How many obligations do I here behold on my part for exposing my life in the Mission for the salvation of Souls? Thine own most holy Example, the Practice of thy Apostles and beloved Disciples and the Martyrs of all Ages, thy heavenly Inspirations, the nature of my Institute and vow of Obedience, fraternal Charity to Mankind, and lastly natural Gratitude and Affection towards my own distressed Country; all these engage me therein. And therefore (O divine Master!) I do here freely offer myself to go, when Superiours shall please to call me in thy Name. In the mean space I will do my best to prepare myself for it. But since I am too conscious of my frailty to confide in my own forces, and that thou, (O Lord) art my only strength and support; let thy Grace (which is never wanting to them that trust in thee) powerfully shield me in all difficult Adventures and give me courage, constancy and perseverance in time of Persecution, and whensoever occasion shall exact a Trial of my fidelity and zeal for thy Glory.

§. III. *But let the Ministers.*] Whose authority in this case, as in all others, the General has power to modify, limit, or restrain; it being according to Hierarchical order,

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that

*The things  
which thou  
hast heard*

of me by many  
witnesses, these  
commend to  
faithful Men,  
who shall be  
fit to teach o-  
thers also. 2.  
Tim. 2. 2.  
What condi-  
tions go to  
the making  
up of a com-  
pleat Mission-  
ner.

Reasons to  
prove the Ne-  
cessity of pro-  
viding our-  
selves of  
them.

Eccli. 13. 2.

Ofec. 4. 9.

that the Greater may bound the power of the Lesser. Give licence to none but such as they shall see. ] Upon due examination. Fit to be sent. ] Persons in all respects Qualify'd for it. Men without crime, as the SteWARDS of God; not proud, not angry, not given to wine, not Strikers, not Covetous of filthy lucre : But given to hos-pitality, gentle, sober, just, holy, continent : Imbracing that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that they may be able to exhort in sound doctrine, and to reprove them that gain-say it. Tit. 1. v. 7. Such as are well vers'd in holy Scriptures, in cases of Conscience, and in points of Contro-very, constant in Faith, strong of Body, and irreprehensible in Conversation; pious, prudent, judicious, charitable, zealous, sweet, modest, patient, mild, courteous, affable, just, upright, chaste, sober, temperate. For the Im-ployments of a mission require a large stock of Knowledge, and of all sorts of Virtue and good Qualities; without which if you engage yourself therein, you will have more reason to fear, than to hope for Success; and may justly apprehend, lest yourself should rather take in the spirit and sentiments of the World, than that the World take in yours. He that handles Pitch, says the Wise-Man, will have his hands defil'd therewith; And they ought to be well rubb'd over before with Oil, if you would not have the Pitch stick to them. It is the same with us in regard of those of the world, whom we go to convert; we ought to be well fill'd and penetrated with the unction of Grace, of Prayer, of Mor-tification, and of all good works, that worldly Conversation and the bad Habits of sinners may not stick to and defile us. But if we take not this precaution, we shall have reason to fear that the World may communicate to us its Vices and Maximes, and that these draw us along with them into its irregularities and disorders, to verify the saying of the Pro-phet; Such as the People are, such is the Priest.

*S. John Chrysostom*, in his third book of the Sacraments, desirous to let us understand what Priests ought to be, whose Ministry obliges them to converse with all sorts of People in the world, says, they should be in the midst of the World, as the three Children were in the midst of the fiery Furnace of *Babylon*. For in effect we are in the Mission in the midst of flames, and these flames are far more ardent than those of that Furnace were. The flames of Ambition, of Impurity, of Envy, of Covetousness, of Detraction, raise themselves furiously round about us, and encompass us on all sides. And because the Fire penetrates where-soever it finds an entrance, and spoils and blackens all it meets with; the Priest of God, adds this Father, ought to take care, lest this Smoke approaches so far as to touch him; and prevent the flames not only from burning him, but even hinder the smoke they send forth from being able so much as to blacken him. See then according to this holy Father, what precautions we ought to take, and with what circumspection we ought to carry ourselves in the mission amongst Worldlings; being there, as *S. Paul* speaks, *In the middle of a wicked and perverse Nation*; and therefore ought to be extremely well arm'd, lest the Scandals and Disorders we see amongst them should corrupt our minds and hearts. Physicians, and such as assist the Sick, are accustom'd when the Diseases are very contagious to take Preservatives, and carry Perfumes about them to hinder the effects of the Contagion, and that the bad Air may do them no hurt: But the Sick which we treat, and have conversation withall in the world, are attack'd with contagious Diseases that are easily catcht, if great care and precaution be not taken by the preservatives of Mortification and of all sorts of Virtue. It is requisite that a Confessor, who is continually oblig'd to apply his hands to wounds full of filth and rottenness, should

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have a good stomach to prevent that the bad Odour of so many sins which Confessions are fill'd withall turns not his stomach, and excites not bad thoughts and motions that may corrupt the Purity thereof.

Wherefore, my dear Brethren, we that are design'd by our Institute to be expos'd to so many dangerous rencounters in the Mission, let us carefully arm ourselves against them. Let us endeavour to acquire for ourselves a plentiful stock, as well of Doctrine, as of all kinds of Vertue. Let us diligently labour in the Cloister for our own Spiritual advancement, to be in a state afterwards to labour profitably for the advancement of our Neighbour. Let us begin with Ourselves, for it is that which the Apostle recommends earnestly to us in the person of his Disciple, as the Foundation of all the rest, when he says: *Attend to Thyself.* Each one ought first of all to attend to Himself, and seriously apply his best endeavours towards his Particular advancement. For God, who is the author of Grace as well as of Nature, *who strongly imbraces the Universe from one extremity to the other, and disposes all things with sweetness*, keeps the same order in the works of Grace, that he do's in those of Nature; where to speak in Philosophical terms, *Every like produces its like.* Since then in Natural things, we see that besides the General cause of their production, there ought to be also a near and Immediate cause of the same *Species*, to give to each Being that particular Form which it ought to have; as for example, there ought to be Fire to produce another Fire, and Light to produce another Light: So in Spiritual things, it is God's pleasure, that to produce *Patience, Humility, Charity* in a heart, the Preacher or Confessor, who is the Immediate cause he makes use of; should be Humble, Patient and Charitable. Moreover as in Natural things, we see that a Plant, for example, produces no seed for

1. Tim. 4. 16.

Sap. 8. 1.

§. III.

*Their Missioners.*

§ 17

for the multiplication of its own *Species*, till it be grown Great: So in things of Grace, God will have us to be great in Vertue and Spirituality, to bring forth Spiritual Children, and to be able to say with the Apostle, *By means of the Gospel I have begotten you in Jesus-Christ.* For which reason *S. Denys the Areopagite*, speaking of the sanctity and perfection which Priests and Ministers of the Gospel ought to have, whom God has chosen to be the Dispensers both of his blood and word, says: That they ought to be Saints, to the end they may sanctify others; Perfect, that they may render others so; and Enlightn'd, that they may also, illuminate the Faithful by their light. They ought to be inflam'd with the Love of God, that thereby they may inflame others. Because as *S. Gregory* says, he who burns not, cannot let another on fire. How is it possible that from a congeal'd heart, inflam'd words should proceed? Would you have your words inflame your Neighbour, endeavour that they proceed from a heart inflam'd with divine Love, and then it will happen that you shall communicate to all the world that Fire, which the Son of God came to bring upon earth, *I came to Luc. 12. 49. set the Earth on fire, and what do I desire, but that it burn?* Iron touch'd with the Load-stone, draws Iron to it: So a Man touch'd by God, draws other Men to him; but if your words be not of a Man touch'd by God, how can they be able to draw other Men to God? And how can you be able to inflame others with the Love of God, if you be not first inflam'd yourself? Do's not *Rhetorick* itself teach us, that there is no better means to excite any Passion in the heart of others, than first of all to excite it in your own? For how can an Orator draw Tears from his Auditory, if he sheds not a Tear himself? It is the same here: How can you inspire the Contempt of the world to your Auditors, if you do not truly condemn it yourself? How can you move them to Mortification

cation and Penance, if you are not yourself mov'd thereto? And how can you think to render them devout, chaste, sober, if you are not so yourself? We can never communicate that to another, which we have not in ourselves, according to the common Axiom, *No body gives what he has not.* How can you inspire to others those Sentiments, you have not yourself? Preachers who have nothing else but Words, are like Pieces of *Canon*, which are discharg'd without a Bullet, the whole effect of which, ends in making a great Noise. They make a great deal of Noise in their Pulpits by words, and by beating them with their hands; but this is only, as *1. Cor. 9. 26.* it were, according to the Apostl's phrase, *To beat the Air.* For in reality they touch the Heart of no body; because they have not that within themselves, with which they ought to touch others; they have not Example and Sanctity of life, they have not the Spirit of God, which is to give weight and force to all that they say. It is therefore to this, that Confessors and Preachers, and all those whose Employments have any relation to their Neighbour, ought chiefly to apply themselves; to the end, that God may make choice of them, to be profitable Instruments for the salvation of Souls.

That we ought not to desire to go to the Mission before we are fit for it.

*Serm. de vit. & exerc. Monach.*

From hence it is easy to be seen, how much those hot-spur Zealots are deceiv'd, who, from the first rudiments of School-divinity, from the first ray of Light which they receive in Prayer, from the least spark of Piety they feel in their hearts, would be presently running into the Mission, and all on a sudden put themselves upon Preaching, Disputing, Converting, and the Guiding of souls. *S. Ephraim* deplores this abuse, and says, it is a Sentiment that comes not from the spirit of God, but from the spirit of Presumption and Pride. They would begin, says he, to teach others, before they know any thing themselves. They would intrude themselves to give Laws and Rules before they have learn'd

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the Laws and Rules themselves. They take upon them to deliver their opinions upon matters of Importance, before they have begun to Spell; and before they are capable to receive Correction, they take upon them to give Correction. Such Persons as these, says *S. Gregory*, ought to consider, that little Birds who would fly before their wings are fully feather'd, fall upon the ground instead of flying in the air; that a Wall when it is fresh and new made, if the Timber be charg'd upon it, it rather destroys than makes a Building; and that Women who are brought to bed before their time, rather increase the number of Graves than augment Families. Whereupon the same holy Doctor also takes notice, that though *Jesus Christ*, the eternal Wisdom of the Father, was infinitely wise from the first moment of his Conception, yet he began not to teach others, till he was thirty years of Age, and after he had prepar'd himself for it by his Retreat in the desert, by Prayer and Meditation, by forty days Fast, and many other Austerities. It was not that he stood in need, says this great Saint, of any preparation; but he would teach us by his own example, how great a preparation and perfection is requir'd in us for so sublime a Ministry, as is that of a Mission.

*Past. Admon.*  
p. 3. c. 26.

O Almighty Lord, and Super-intendent of thine elect Vineyard! who saidst: *The Harvest is great, but the Workmen are few, pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he send Workmen into his Harvest*: I give thee all the thanks that possibly I can, O Heavenly Master, for the care which thou hast of this thy Harvest, to send Labourers to gather the same together. And since thou wilt be pray'd, a thousand times I beseech and pray thee, to send forth many faithful and exemplar Workmen from our Seraphical Order, true Imitators of their holy Founder, and in all respects so well qualify'd, that they may labour so worthily, that thereby thy holy Faith may be dilated, the number of thy Servants increas'd, and the glory of thy Heavenly Father every where augmented.

*Math. 9-73.*

§. IV. I come now to speak of the Excellency of the mission The sublime  
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dignity of a  
Millioner's  
calling pro-  
v'd from  
Scripture,  
and Fathers.

sion, which I propose, as a singular means to encourage you, O faithful Labourers in the vineyard of our Lord ! who are dispers'd in the several Provinces and Countries throughout the world, the Ornament and Glory of our Seraphical Order. It is to you then I here address myself. It is very true, most valourous Champions of the Gospel, Ministers of *Jesus-Christ*, and Dispensers of the mysteries of the word of God, that you have upon your hands the most excellent of all Employments, being honourably associated with the world's Redemer, in that great Concern, which caus'd him to put on our weakness, to take servile flesh, and become our Brother : *Towit*, the making known to Mankind the will of his Heavenly Father, the true way to everlasting Bliss, and the delivering of Souls from damnation, misery and the thralldom of the Devil, whereof the Salvation of one alone, is of incomparably greater Value, than the purchase of the whole Universe. To you it is, the Doctor of the Gentiles directs these words : *God has reconcil'd us to himself by Christ; and has given to you the ministry of Reconciliation. For Christ therefore you are Ambassadors, God as it were exhorting us by you.* And for that reason one cannot sufficiently commend so pious and charitable an Enterprize, as is that wherein you are engag'd. You are the Peace-makers of Heaven, and the true Children of God. Blessed are they, who procure peace and union among Men ; but such as procure peace betwixt God and Men, by converting Sinners, and reconciling them to him, a thousand-fold blessed ; for they partake in that Office of divine charity, which the Son of God himself perform'd, *Reconciling all things to his Father, and pacifying by the Blood he shed upon the Cross, whatsoever is upon Earth, and whatsoever also is in Heaven.*

Serm. de Nat.  
Dom.

S. John Chrysostom takes notice, that *Jesus-Christ* having thrice demanded of S. Peter, whether he lov'd him : He gave

gave no other answer to all the assurances that *S. Peter* gave him of this ; but only, *Feed my Sheep, Feed my Lambs.* As if he should have said, it is true, you love me indeed, but you cannot testify this your Love better, than by labouring with me in the Salvation of Souls, which I have redeem'd with my Blood. There cannot be a more excellent, more noble, and higher Function in the whole world. *S. Denys* says, that to cooperate with God in the Salvation of Souls, is the most Divine of all Employments. And the same *S. Chrysostom* assures us, that there is nothing more pleasing to God, than the Salvation of Souls ; neither is there any thing that he more takes to heart. *It is his Will*, says the Apostle, *that all Men should be sav'd, and come to the knowledge of the Truth.* And do's not God himself tell us by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, saying, *Is the Death of a Sinner my Will, or not rather that he should be converted and live ?* Seeing then God desires so much the Salvation of all men, we can do nothing that is more pleasing to him, than by labouring for their Salvation. Yea though your Riches should be never so great, says *S. Chrysostom* again, and though you should give all you have to the Poor, yet you would do far more in converting one Soul, than by doing all this. And *S. Gregory* says, It is a greater Miracle to convert a Sinner, than to raise one from the Dead. And in effect, the Salvation of a Sinner is a far greater work of God, than the Creation of the world. For the Creation of the world cost him only a Word, *He said, and all things were made ; he commanded, and all things were created :* But the Salvation of men cost him far dearer than Words, they cost him both his Blood and his Life.

We may also judge of the excellency of this Employment, and how pleasing it is to God, by the greatness of the Price that is annex'd thereto ; which is first seen in our Saviour himself, by the glorious recompence that follow'd his Death.

*Calef. Hier.*  
*cap. 3.*

*Hom. 2. sup.*  
*Genes.*

*1. Tim. 2. 4.*

*Ezech. 18. 23.*

*Hom. 3. sup.*  
*1. Cor.*

*Dial. 1. 3.*  
*c. 17.*

*Pf. 32. 9.*

- Philip. 2. 9.* For it was for this, says the Apostle, that God exalted him, and gave him a Name above all other Names; that at the Name of Jesus all knees should bow, both in Heaven, Earth and Hell; and that all Tongues should confess that Jesus-Christ is in the glory of his Father. King David lets us understand the self same thing, when he speaks of the *Messias*; How that upon his way, he shall drink of the Torrent, and for this reason his Head shall be exalted. It is also the sense of these words of the Prophet *Isay*: If he gives his Life for Sinners, he will see a long Posterity; that is to say, that for all which he should suffer for Men, he should be glorify'd eternally by his Father. *S. James* says, He, who shall bring back a Sinner from the error of his life, shall save his Soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins. And *S. Gregory* says hereupon, that if the delivering a man from Corporal death, who must dy sooner or later, be an action worthy to be recompens'd, what recompense do's he not deserve, who delivers a Soul from Everlasting death, and is the cause that it eternally enjoys God in glory? The Scripture do's not also content itself, to say; That those who shall teach Wisdom to men, as Jesus-Christ did, shall have Life Everlasting; It says moreover, That those who shew the way of Justice to many, shall shine like Stars for all eternity.
- Eccli. 24. 30.*
- Dan. 12. 3.*
- Moral. 19. cap. 12.*

O Sovereign Pastor! How great is the Love which thou bearest thy Sheep, and how greatly do'st thou desire that their Curates, thy Vicars here on earth, do love them, and feed them for thee; for which thou hast assign'd so ample a Reward? Dear Lord, I desire to shew the Love, which I have to feed thy Sheep given me in charge, because they are thine; and in this alone that they are thine, I will be a thousand times more careful of them, than if they were mine.

From what has been said, we may draw two things  
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our direction, and spiritual profit. The first, is a great love and esteem for the Mission; because it is so pleasing to God, so profitable to our Neighbour, and so beneficial to Ourselves; which ought for that cause to serve us for a special Spur to move us to imploy ourselves therein, with all our strength and faculties both of Body and Soul. The second is, that all our practices of Piety, and the exercises of a Monastical State, as far inferiour to it, ought to give place to this admirable charity and love of the Salvation of Souls; and that the obligations of our Rule of *Not receiving Money, of not wearing Linnen, Shoos, Secular Clothes, Riding on Horse-back, Fasting, &c.* are all subservient to this grand Affair of our Neighbour's eternal welfare: These being only of Humane right and institution, whereas that other is of Natural Divine; and therefore according to the rules of Equity by a just *Epikia* to be prefer'd before them, by reason of its more eminent perfection; for according to the Apostle, *Charity is the greatest of all Vertues.*

1. Cor. 13. 13.

S. V. But yet we must tell you, and it is here greatly to be taken notice of, that it is only so far, as the obligations of our Institute are incompatible with it, and no otherwise; and therefore we ought, for the discharge of our consciences, to have a special care in all things to live up to our holy Rule as much as we can; and see there be always some sufficient cause or real necessity for those Dispensations which we have occasion to make use of in the Mission, without permitting ourselves to be flatter'd by flesh and blood, which alledges many times a Necessity when there is only a Sensuality in the case. So long as we are *Frier-Minors*, the obligations of our Institute remain in full force against us, as Persons that have promis'd to God, *Always to observe this Life and Rule.* And for that reason ought to be observ'd in the Mission, as well as in the Cloister; to wit, so far as they are

The Missioners of the Order are oblig'd to the observance of their Rule so far as is consistent with the Mission they are in.

Cap. 2. Reg.

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D. Thom. 2. 2.  
q. 185. a. 8.

consistent with the works of Charity and the gaining of Souls. After the same manner, as Divines with *S. Thomas* generally hold concerning Bishops; that notwithstanding their Miters, they still remain oblig'd to their Vows of religion and other obligations of their respective Institutes, so far and in as much as these do not disagree with, nor misbecome their Episcopal dignity and office. In such sort, that if we cannot observe our Rule there in perfection, we ought at least to come as near to the point as conveniently may be; the lesser Obligations, which are these of our Institute, retaining their force, and keeping possession, till such time they are diminish'd, or extinguish'd by the greater, towit, of Charity towards our Neighbour.

Wadding. ad  
an. 1226.

Hear, if you please, upon this Subject *Honorius III.* speaking to the first Missioners of the Order, and you from thence will learn, upon what terms it is that he gives them a Commission to go among *Saracens*; according to the tenour whereof, you are to govern yourselves, as far as your circumstances will reasonably allow, what ever Mission you are in; these are his words: " We mercifully dispense with you, and give you leave to make use of Mony; but sparingly, in as much as a weighty and urgent Necessity compells you, and the Utility of the mission invites you; and that for meat, drink and cloaths only; and upon condition, you proceed therein candidly and sincerely, without permitting Covetousness, or Sensuality to take share with you. So far his Holiness. What is above this, more or less, ought to be lookt upon by our Missioners, as a transgression of our holy Rule.

That we ought to labour in the Mission for the salvation

Wherefore, my dearest Brethren, let every one, according to the Circumstances he is under, ( for all are not alike, even in the same Mission ) have a special care, yet without scruple and anxiety, to regulate his affairs after the most prudent

dent manner and best becoming a Conscience fearing God ; endeavouring to labour in such sort in the Mission , as to make sure his own Salvation. Let him examine himself seriously , and see ; If, in the post where he is , there be no faithful Syndick to be found to receive and disburse Money for him ? If he have not recourse to it without Necessity , laying it out in Curiosities , or Superfluities ? If he of necessity must Ride ? And if so : Whether he cannot borrow a Horse when he wants , without being at the trouble and charge of keeping one ? Remembring what our holy Father commands : „ That they ought not to Ride , unless forc'd by a manifest „ Necessity , or Infirmary. And again : ” I injoin all my Bre- „ thren , both Clerks and Lay-brothers , who travail abroad , „ though they dwell or abide in places , that upon no account „ they keep any Beast , either by themselves , or by another , „ or any other ways. Neither shall it be lawful for them to „ Ride , unless Sickness , or some urgent Necessity obliges „ them. If his Clothes be not too Costly , nor exceed in Number ? If he must needs have a Sword by his side , a rich Watch in his pocket , eat meat upon the Fasts of the Order ? And so of the rest of the obligations of the Rule. All which must be narrowly look'd into , if we desire to discharge a good conscience , and reap fruit in the Mission. Lest otherwise it happen to us , which God forbid , what befell a skilful Swimmer , who imprudently adventuring to save his Companion fallen into the water , they both were drown'd together. A most lamentable Case ! If we convert whole Nations to the Faith , and save the Souls of all the world , what will it avail us , if we lose our own ? What can a man give in exchange , to purchase his Soul again , when it shall be lost ? There can be no Loss like this , of which no Compensation can be made. *Help your Neighbour in whatsoever you are able , but take care , that you fall not yourself ,* says the Wise-

of our Neigh-  
bours Soul,  
so as not to  
neglect our  
own.

2. Reg. c. 3.

1. Reg. c. 15.

Eccli. 29. 27.

2. Cor. 8. 13.

Wise-Man. And remember, that Charity well order'd, begins at home. *It is not just*, says the Apostle, *to give to others that they may be at their ease; and that we, for want of what we give, should remain in streights our own selves; but we must observe an Equality.* That is, love your Neighbour as yourself, but not more than yourself; which he is convinc'd to do, who neglects his own Salvation to procure other Peoples. *Seneca* speaking of those, who have a greater care of the Amendment of others, than of their own, compares them to Pits out of which clear Water is drawn, and the Mud is kept to themselves. Pope *Nicolas* also, in one of his Decrees, makes use of a Comparison very proper to our purpose; He says, they are like lighted Torches, which give light to others, but at the same time consume themselves; they lead and help others, and neglect to conduct and govern themselves. There is a great deal of Folly, and no Charity at all in this; because there is no degree of Charity above that, which the Wise-Man advises us to have for ourselves, when he says: *Take pity on your own Soul, by rendring it pleasing to God.* Behold here the first thing a Missioner ought to do, behold what he ought to begin withall, and principally attend to; as to what regards the help and advancement of his Neighbour, this ought only to follow it. For if I have but a little Oil left for my own use, says *S. Bernard*, as the widow of *Serepta* had, do you think I will deprive myself of it for your sake? I will keep it for myself, and will not give it, but at the Prophet's command. But if any one of those who perhaps think better of me, than they see me deserve, or hear me spoken of, do with instance press me for it; I will answer them with the Wise Virgins, for fear there should not be enough for me and thee too, go rather to those that sell it, and buy some for thy self. We ought not therefore to forget ourselves, or neglect our own

Eccij. 30. 24.

Serm. 18. in Cant.

own salvation, upon pretence of labouring for the salvation of our Neighbour; which would be a very great Abuse; and such an one had better a thousand times have remained in his Cloister, than undertaken the charge of Souls in a Mission.

This being a matter of the greatest Importance, Superiours will do well, if in sending their Subjects into the Mission, they dispense with them in the obligations of the Rule, as much as they shall judge requisite for each ones purpose according to the Circumstances he is under: Supplying by that means, what may be sometimes wanting of a real Necessity, sufficient otherwise to excuse him for acting against his Rule without a Dispensation. Which will be no small satisfaction to tender Consciences; it being a difficult thing in particular Cases to determine precisely *hic & nunc* the just point of such a Sufficiency, which do's not consist in an *Indivisible*, but has certain degrees of Latitude, according to the circumstances of Time, Place, Persons, Offices, Employments, &c. within which, a man may be said to observe his Rule more or less perfectly, without transgressing the same. So *Observantines, Recollects, and Capucines*, though something different in the fashion and courseness of their Habits, in the meanness of their Buildings, Moveables, Diet, Churches, Ornaments of the Altar, &c. may notwithstanding all three be said to observe the Rule *ad Litteram*, without taxing or censuring one another thereupon. After the same manner as Vertue, which, though in the height of its perfection and excellency it be seated exactly in the Middle, yet may decline somewhat towards either Extremity, without its degenerating presently into Vice.

Some Means propos'd for the better securing our Salvation in the Mission.

I said: *What may be sometimes wanting of a real Necessity, sufficient otherwise to excuse him for acting against his Rule without a Dispensation.* For where there is a manifest Necessity, there is no need of any Dispensation, but every



every one in such case uses his own right, the obligation of the Law then ceasing, according to the common Axiom, *Necessity has no Law*. So, our Missioners without any scruple may wear Secular Cloaths, Ride, take Mony, eat Meat, omit their Office, &c. where the circumstances of their Mission are such as necessarily require it; these Liberties in the like cases being included in the nature of their Ministry, and the general Faculties of a Mission; and are rationally suppos'd to be excepted by the Rule itself according to the intention of its Founder, who gives leave, yea and invites us to go among Saracens and Infidels. For where the End is approv'd, permitted, and counsell'd, there without doubt the necessary Means for arriving at that End are also allow'd. And then only a Dispensation has place, whe the Cause of itself insufficient, to excuse us from acting against any precept of the Rule, is made sufficient by means of a Dispensation added to it; which Superiours by virtue of their Office, upon any reasonable motive have authority to do, for quieting and securing their Subjects consciences; and so prudently make out what is short of a Necessity, sufficient to exempt them from observing the Rule in such a particular Case.

A Spiritual  
Retreat very  
useful for  
that purpose.

Moreover, for a further security of our Salvation in the mission, it were to be wish'd, we could be prevail'd upon to make once a year a *Spiritual Retreat*; therein to call ourselves to an account, and examine seriously the obligations of our State, to see what progress we make in Vertue, and to give ourselves more particularly to the exercise of Prayer, spiritual Reading, Examen of conscience and Recollection, than we are wont to do at other times. For as Secular persons, besides the ordinary Meals they take every day for the refectiō of their Body, sometimes solace themselves also by particular Feasts, wherein they have better Chear than ordinary: So it is very just that besides the ordinary time we daily

daily imploy in Prayer, Meditation, and other spiritual Exercises, which are the food and nourishment of our Souls, we should sometimes make spiritual Feasts and Banquets, in which our Soul taking more than its wonted allowance upon ordinary Days, may fully satisfy itself with the abundant sweetness of God's graces and favours. Nature likewise teaches us this: For we see, that besides the Dew that falls every Night, it sometimes rains whole Weeks together without intermission; that the Earth being well water'd to the very bottom, neither the greatest Heats, nor the most violent Winds, might be able to dry it up. We must therefore according to this example, make choice of some particular times, in which besides the Dew which we procure for our Souls by our ordinary practices of Devotion, we may also procure for it, such large showers and effusions of so many Graces, that neither our exteriour Occupations, nor the Winds of so many dangerous temptations to which we are expos'd in the Mission, may ever be able to dry it up. This has been the custom of many learned and holy Personages; who laying aside their daily Occupations for a time, have given themselves more freely to their spiritual Exercises.

But this Practice is not only of great importance for our Advancement in vertue, but also hinders us from going Backwards therein. Because the Frailty of man is so very great, and the Inclinations we have to evil so very powerful, that though we should carry with us into the Mission ever so large a stock of Devotion, we shall soon come to relent therein, and by little and little lose our first Fervour. For we return to our first Tepidity and natural Remissness, as easily, as Warm water returns to its first condition of Coldness, after we have taken it off the fire. *For the mind of man, as the Scripture says, is inclin'd to evil from its Youth. And is like a perverse Nation, to which Malice is become Na-*

Gen. 8. 21.

Sap. 12. 10.

tural.

*tural.* And for that reason we have great need, amidst our exercises and functions abroad, to recruit ourselves sometimes by Retirement; it being an Axiom among Philosophers, *That every Agent suffers by its Action.* So that though our Employments be good and holy, yet as a Knife grows dull and flat by daily use, and requires that it should be sharpen'd from time to time, so we grow dull by our continual Action, and relent in the care of our own Advancement, by labouring to procure that of our Neighbour. Wherefore it is of very great importance to make now and then a Retreat; whereby, disengaging ourselves from all sorts of Employments, we give our Soul leisure to repair the dissipation of its forces, and regain new strength, to be able to continue in Action. Those who travel by Sea, must from time to time go ashore to lay in fresh Provisions; and in the same manner, those who are embark'd in exterior Employments for the salvation of their Neighbour, and who are continually encompass'd with so many dangers, as the Sea of this world is full of, have reason oftentimes to go ashore, and enter the Harbour of solitude and recollection, to furnish themselves with fresh spiritual Supplies, and thereby make provision of what is necessary for the continuation of their Voyage. The Gospel affords us an excellent example of this. *Jesus-Christ* had sent his Apostles to several places to preach; and when they return'd from their Missions, and had given account of them to the Son of God, he bids them, *Come aside to a place of Solitude, and there repose and rest yourselves for a while.* If the Saviour of the world gave this counsel to his Apostles; and if such Persons as they wanted Repose and Retirement, with how far greater reason ought we to believe, that we stand in need thereof?

MARK. 6. 31.

O sweet Redeemer I lead me then into Solitude, and there speak to my Heart, renew in my bowels thy holy Spirit, and inspire me

me to take such measures as are most proper for securing my Everlasting Happiness. For what will it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World, and sustain the damage of his Soul? O, let this just Caution, this necessary Prudence, be still present in all my charities towards my Neighbour, assistant at all my resolutions, and chief President over all my counsels and undertakings in the Mission; that being powerfully sway'd and directed by it, I may know how, when, and where to act, and execute what is conformable to thy divine Pleasure, and to the Obligation of my state; and so labour to procure other Peoples eternal Salvation, without prejudice to my own.

S. VI. And this may suffice for Missions, as they concern *Frier-Minors* in general. We will now speak of them, as they somewhat nearer relate to our own Country. Where in the first place is to be observ'd, that we are not to imagine that all our Missioners ought to be so well qualify'd and complete, as to have every one of them all the Conditions above mention'd; no more than that all the stations of our English Mission are alike. There are different kinds, ranks and degrees; wherein a prudent Superiour places his Subjects in several Posts, according to their different capacities, and the sundry functions they are to perform. There are some magnanimous Souls, well-spoken, daring, and brave, fit to appear before Magistrates, Princes, and Monarchs: There are others more bashful, faint-hearted and pusillanimous. Some are gentle, quaint, and well-bred: Others more down-right, plain, and of meanner education. Some are Contemplatives, others more Active. Some are delighted with solitude and retirement; others more sociable, recreative, and pleas'd with conversation. Some are of a condescending, sweet, and complying Temper; others more harsh, rigid and strict. Some make no more wind and weather, heats and colds; others are of a more delicate Constitution, and cannot away with journies and fatigues. Some are for disputing Controversy, others for Preaching, others for Catechizing children, others for instructing

The nature of our English Mission: where a prudent Superiour places his Subjects in diverse Posts, according to their different talents, dispositions, and humours.

youth. Some are for Residences, others for Circuits : Some for Towns, others for the Country : Some for the Rich, others for the Poor, &c. Yet all are useful in the Mission. Yea not so much as Lay-brothers, but may therein be serviceable upon occasion in one kind or other, and share with Priests in the conversion of Souls : Whether it be in serving these in their Temporal concerns, or by helping them to instruct and catechise Children, or by their edifying and exemplar Behaviour, or by religious and pious Discourses in conversation, or otherways as the Spirit of God shall inspire them. In effect there have been many, as appears in the Annals of our Order, who by these and the like means have made greater progress in Souls, and who perhaps have gain'd more to God, than many Preachers and Confessors have done. And it is the Superiours province, as we said, to dispose both of these and those, according to their several talents, humours and inclinations, with all sweetness, facility, and satisfaction to the Subject, for the good of Souls, and the honour of God's Church. This suppos'd, the next thing to be consider'd is.

Advice to  
young Mis-  
sioners at  
their first  
entrance into  
the Mission.

You must think, when you are call'd home to the Mission of your country, that you have no slight Commission from God ; and that being freed from Regular observance, and the entrance into rules of a Monastical life, you have not therefore liberty to do all you please. On the contrary, you are under a stricter obligation than ever of behaving yourself well ; and your Conversation ought to be so much the more edifying and exemplar, by how much the more you therein are expos'd to the eyes of a People critical, censorious, and apt to be scandaliz'd at the least Imperfections. Therefore let it please you to hearken to the advice of the Apostle Saint Paul : *To no Man giving any offence, that our Ministry be not blasphem'd ; But in all things let us exhibit ourselves as the Ministers of*

2. Cor. 6. 3.

of God. And again : *Be thou vigilant , labour in all things , 2. Tim. 4. 5. do the work of an Evangelist , fulfill thy Ministry.*

First then at your entrance into the Vineyard of our Lord; you are to frame for yourself a Soul totally noble, wholly clate, meerly celestial, which conceives strong resolutions to dedicate itself to God and his Neighbour, not in a mercenary manner, but with the utmost endeavour of its power. Priestly Dignity requires of you a sober gravity alienated from the ordinary way, a serious life, weight, and maturity. How would you have the Laity honour you, if you have nothing above them? How should they admire you, beholding their Vices and Imperfections in your Manners? Wisdom requires, you consider the mysteries of Heaven: Justice wills you to stand Sentinel for the People, who expect aid from your Prayers: Strength desires you to defend the tabernacle and camp of the God of Hosts: Temperance ordains, you live with singular sobriety and continency. You are to be an Eye to the blind, a Foot to the lame, Arm and Hand to the maim'd, and a Sanctuary to all the world. You are plac'd, says *S. Isidore of Damietta*, between Divine and Humane nature, to honour the one with your Sacrifices, and edify the other by our Examples. A Priest ought to be as a young Child, issu'd out of the school and bosom of the Son of God, even as an Angel to govern the Church. He should be entire in his Judgments, just in his Resolutions, devout at his Prayers, prudent in Recreations, sober at Table, patient in Adversity, affable in Prosperity, rich in Vertues, sage in Words, upright in Preaching, and free in all good Actions.

You must learn to love Souls, as the most precious Moveables you have in the world, to please yourself with the places where the objects of your Zeal are, and the knots of your Charge. Satan in *Job* went round about the earth to entrap

Motives to incite them to the zeal of Souls.

entrap Man : And do you think you do too much, in your opinion, if you advance some steps to save Men ? *Noe* was shut up in the Ark with about three hundred kinds of Beasts, peaceable among the waves and destruction of the world, because such was the will of God : And cannot you rest among Souls, created according to the Image of the Divinity, where-to you are by duty engag'd under the peril of your Soul ? What a shame is it for a Missioner, if he cannot live, unless perpetually with Cards and Dice in his hand, or among Horses, Dogs and Hawks, when God summons him to the charge of Souls ? *Julius Caesar* wonder'd to see men, who dandl'd Apes, having Children in their houses ; and who can but admire, if God allotting you so many spiritual Children, you pass your time with Animals ? Hear what the Seraphical Doctor says to you to inflame your Charity towards the zeal of Souls : *O homo . honoris Dei scitibundus ingemisce &c.* O Man, out of an ardent thirst of God's honour, bitterly lament and mourn, for that thou seest his Image defac'd, his Blood trodden under foot, the Habitation of the holy Ghost defil'd, the Spouse of *Christ* prostituted, and everlasting Happiness reputed as Dung. If *Mardocheus* so much bewail'd the Corporal death of the Jews, which was hanging over their heads through the malicious designs of *Haman* ; How can we but lament the slaughter of so great a multitude of Souls ? Wherefore let the Just man be animated all manner of ways to deliver Souls from sin, from Hell-fire, and eternal damnation. Otherwise how can he say that he loves God, if he permit his Image to be neglected, and to ly upon a Dung-hill ? Thus *S. Bonaventure*. If you should see, says *S. Hierom*, a Blind-man that was upon the point to cast himself into a Ditch, you would endeavour to hinder him from it. How then can we behold our Brethren throw themselves headlong into the abyss of Hell, and not stretch out

*Stim. Amor.*  
p. 2. c. 11.

a hand to draw them back ? *S. John Chrysostom* makes use of another comparison : When we are out at Sea, and discover a Vessel afar off that suffers Shipwreck, we feel ourselves presently touch'd with Compassion, and how good a wind so ever we have to steer on our Course, we turn and steer towards the place where the Vessel was lost. We approach it, we take in our Sails, we cast Anchor, we throw out Ropes and Planks on all sides, and in fine, we do all things imaginable, to endeavour to save those we perceive in danger. It is thus we ought to carry ourselves, during the course of our Navigation upon the Sea of this world, where tempests continually rise upon it; and the banks, and shelves which it is full of, daily and hourly cause very sad Shipwrecks. Wherefore when we see our Neighbour in this condition, we must presently quit all our Affairs, and run to his Succour; after the examples of the ancient Fathers of the Desert; who though particularly call'd by God to solitude, yet they quitted the sweet repose of their Cells in the hard times of the Church's persecutions, and went into Towns to oppugn Hereticks, to instruct the Faithful, and to suffer constantly all things for the love of *Jesus-Christ*. Thus the great *S. Antony* did in the time of *Constantin*; and many others have done the same at other times. *In this we have known the charity of God*, says the beloved Disciple, *because he has yielded his Life for us; and we ought to yield our Lives for our Brethren.* Rom. 16. ad Pop. 1. Joan. 3. 16.

The Blood of the Saviour of the world, shed upon the earth, lets us see of how great a price a Soul is, what esteem God makes of it, and what a tenderness he has for it. Behold here what ought to fill us with zeal and fervour in those Employments that regard the Salvation of Souls. Behold what ought to make us seek out occasions, and with ardour to apply ourselves therein : *Charitas enim Christi urget nos* ; 2. Cor. 5. 14.

The



The Charity of *Jesus-Christ* urges and presses us thereto. Can we make any difficulty in shedding our Blood for him, for whom the Son of God has shed his ? And can we refuse to sacrifice our Life for the love of a God, who has sacrific'd his for us ? What ! shall I see a Soul ready to perish ; a Country-man, a Neighbour, a Friend, a Relation ; shall I see him ready to fall into Hell, into everlasting Torments ; shall I think that God died to redeem him, that it is in my power to save him ; of a Slave and Vessel of sin, misery and eternal malediction to make a Child of light of him, a terrestrial Angel, an adoptive Son of the celestial Father, a Brother and Co-heir of *Jesus-Christ*, and a Temple of the Holy Ghost ; to become through my means an Inhabitant of heaven, a Vessel of election, and to be fill'd with the sight of God, his beginning, his end, his only true and original Happiness ; and shall I not do it even with the loss of my Life ? This is that, my dearest Brethren, which Charity urges us to. The zeal of Souls requires it at our hands. It ought always to be our greatest care, as it was the sole care of the Apostle ; who in his labours, in his chains and sufferings, having Death often before his eyes, he was less touch'd with the things without him, than with the care and sollicitude he always felt within, for the Churches under his charge. In fine, this is it, which at all times has encourag'd, and led forth so many Valiant ones, so many Religious of all Orders, who have undergon, and do daily undergo the labours of Giants, who forsake the smiling favours of their Native soil, to go into places, whether it seems Nature has been afraid to come. Thither they pass through an infinity of dangers, tempests, and monsters ; there they live in forlorn wildernesses, among Tombs of ice and snow ; there they feed upon that, which, to the curious and nice, would be a death to taste. All sweetness and pleasures of humane

2. Cor. XI. 28.

S. VII.

*Their Missioners.*

§ 37

Humane life are thence banish'd ; rigors , toils , and miseries there perpetually reign ; their Eyes see none but barbarous visages , their Ears hear nought but out-cries and yells , their Taste finds only bitterness , their Travails nought but thorns , their Repose but torment , Life but anxiety , and Death very often a tomb of water , to conquer Souls to God. And shall we not enter the Lists with these valorous Champions of *Jesus-Christ* , to share with them in their Laurels ?

O *Jesus* , Father of all blessed unions ! who hast suffer'd Death to unite all the Children of God under one Faith , that were scatter'd over all the Countries of the world , and to purchase for them an Everlasting Crown : Vouchsafe , we humbly beseech thee , to assist with thy special grace , all those whom thou hast made choice of for thy Coadjutors in this great work ; daily augment in them the fire of thy Love , and the zeal of gaining Souls. Let no labour tire them , no difficulty terrify them , no danger daunt them , nor other thing whatsoever draw them from one title of thy true Interest and Honour , and the discharge of their Duty for the conversion of their Neighbours Souls , redeem'd at so dear a rate by the effusion of thy sacred Blood.

§. VII. But if you desire for the good of your Country to make a prosperous progress in the conversion of Souls , and maintain your Reputation and Authority among the people , two things necessary for that purpose ; you must carefully avoid three most dangerous Rocks , which have caus'd the shipwracks of many Missioners ; whereof the one is Avarice , the other Intemperance , and the third Impurity.

Think not to make a fortune in the Mission , but study to become a good man , and a deserving , and believe Providence will not fail to give you what shall be most behovefull. Say to your Country-men what *S. Paul* did to his *Corinthians* : *I will not be burdensome to you ; for I seek not the things that are yours , but you , Seek the kingdom of Heaven , and the salvation of Souls ; and the rest will be added to it.*

Three dangerous rocks to be avoided by our Missioners.

1. rock Avarice. Preservatives against it.

2. Cor. 12. 14.

Y yy

Say

*Pf. 54. 23.*

Say not you are Poor, there can be no Poverty where you have God for Inheritance; and he, whom God all-rich suffices not, deserves to be perpetually Poor. *Cast all your thoughts and cares upon him, and he will nourish and maintain you.* This was the Provision, which our holy Founder made for his Childrens voyage throughout the world, when he sent them, in imitation of the world's Redeemer, to preach the kingdom of Heaven, without *Purse, Scrip, or Shoes.* With this they open'd their passage into all the four quarters of the habitable Earth; and springing from Evangelical and Apostolical Poverty, as from a fruitful Womb, they presently dispers'd themselves, every where denouncing *Christ crucify'd.* For as *S. Bonaventure* observes, holy Poverty, which alone they carry'd with them to bear all their Charges, made them prompt to obedience, strong to labour, light for travelling. And because they possess'd no earthly thing, lov'd nothing, nor fear'd to lose any thing, they were every where secure, living without care or trouble, neither solicitous for their Nights lodging, nor for the Day following.

*cap. 4. vite.*

*Eccli. 20. 31.*

The desire, which men without ceasing have to be ever on the Increase, much vilifies Ecclesiasticks, and is greatly prejudicial to the Ministry of the Gospel. It shuts up their mouths against Truth, to open them to Flattery, according to that of the Wise-Man: *Presents and Gifts blind the eyes of Judges, and as one dumb in the mouth turns away their chastisements;* they taking us, while we take them. For assuredly, he that receives any thing from another, loses his own freedom, seeing Bounty imposes a Necessity of being obsequious for the Benefit receiv'd; and that Liberty which is sold for a Benefit, is so servile, that although it be bold sometimes to adventure upon something, yet the efficacy thereof is of far less weight, than it would be, if it had the full disposing of itself. From whence it comes, that if he, who bestows

bestows any thing upon you, commit a Sin, you cannot reprehend him freely. For who will have so bold a face, as to presume to bark at him that feeds him? Yea it affords you as many Dependances as you have Pretensions. It makes you servilely soothe the passions and vices of the Patrons you live with, from whom you expect a Recompenſe; and by the same means introduces an infinity of unlawful Dispensations, sacrilegious Absolutions, liberties, abuses, and all sorts of disorders into their Families; *Subverting*, as the Apostle says, *Whole houses, teaching the things they ought not, for filthy Lucre*, which occasion their ruine, drawing down both upon them and yourselves the vengeance of Heaven. Behold one of the chief causes of the decay of Religion, and of the destruction of so many Catholick Families among us. That brave Architect *Vitruvius* thought it very strange, that an Artizan presented himself to a great Man, to be employ'd in his own Faculty, and thereupon spake a most remarkable Sentence. I see Architects, says he, who beg, and under hand sue to be employ'd; as for my self, I have learn'd of my Masters, that we should not ask of any Man, but rather be intreated by others to use care and endeavour. He must be Shameless, who blushes not to require that, which may be deny'd him. What would this noble Spirit have said, had he seen Church-men in our Mission to debase themselves, not only to supplications, but to services most unworthy their Character to acquire some fat Residence, to become Chaplain to some Libertine Lord, and have charge of his Family? which others in solitary wildernesses would have fled from, through briars and thorns, among savage Beasts: Many times also intruding themselves wickedly thereinto, by sinister and indirect ways undermining one another, and surprizing an honour by the way of dishonour. Saints have obtain'd Benefices by flying them, and now we must run over the heads

Y yy ij

of

*Nothing is more wicked, than the Covetous man; for he has his Soul also to sell. Eccli. 10. 9. Tit. 1. 11.*

of Men and Beasts, to overtake them; what a Shame!

Yea, it seems to some, that now adays, to have a rich Penitent, is to possess a piece of Land that yields a good Revenue; and that they must have a perpetual Title to it. It is cunning deceit to blind their eyes, to captive them, to ty them to a Confession-seat with an indissoluble Chain, not to permit them conference or commerce with any which may let them see their Bondage, to be offended if they change Confessor, to throw out complaints, and to make it to be accounted as if it were a sin of Adultery. God forbid such a folly ever enter into a generous mind, and unworthily profane the Sanctuary. It is very certain that all good Directors imitate the Sea which receives Rivers into its bosom, without asking from whence they come, or what country they pass'd through, and when they came from thence; nay, so far is it from being displeas'd, that it has not any feeling of it; this being not able to cause any diminution of its Greatness. So, a good spiritual Father leaves all the Souls he directs, in a discreet Permission, to go, to come, to absent themselves, to return, according as it shall be most fit for their commodity, and spiritual advancement. He neither seeks them almost to come near him, or retire from him, so little is his mind busied in the distinction of Persons.

The service  
of the Poor  
to be prefer-  
red before  
that of the  
Rich.

If the love of our Neighbour in this this case were truly such as it ought to be, we should rather choose to exercise our Functions towards the Poor, than towards the Rich; and towards People of mean extraction, than to Persons of quality and condition, for several reasons. First, to follow the Example that *Jesus-Christ* has given us hereof in the Gospel; who refus'd to enter into the house of a great Prince, that came to beg of him to go thither to cure his Son; but he went to the house of the Centurion to heal his Servant that was sick, though the Centurion came not himself to ask it, but only

only sent one to him to beg this cure. Secondly, because the Poor do better represent the person of our Saviour; *who being infinitely Rich, would become Poor for love of us, that we might become rich by his poverty.* Thirdly, because we are hereby more assur'd, that it is God alone whom we seek in our Functions, and it is purely for him that we labour: But when our Functions carry us to treat with the Great ones of the world, oftentimes there is a great deal of Humane respect therein; and it is often that we therein seek ourselves, and act for our own satisfaction, and reputation in the world. Fourthly, because by this means it will be more easy to keep ourselves in Humility. Fifthly, because Experience teaches us, that ordinarily more Fruit is produc'd in the souls of the Poor, than in those of the Rich. For do we not see that the Poor are they, who more apply themselves to follow *Jesus Christ*, and make greater profit by his doctrine? But there are so few of the Rich that follow him, that the holy Text speaking of one of the chief amongst the Jews who imbrac'd his doctrine, takes notice that not daring openly to declare himself, *He came to Jesus by Night.* Then again, we more freely discover truth to the Poor, and reprehend them without any difficulty, who receive in good part whatsoever is said to them, and so it is easier for a Confessor to deal with them; but it is not the same with the Rich and great Persons of the world, we are often puzzl'd what to do with them. For a Confessor dares not take all that liberty he ought, and is afraid to tell them what he thinks; and afterwards he is troubl'd with scruples and remorse, for neglecting it, and that he did not speak his mind freely to them, and also that he had too great a facility and condescendency for them. Besides all this, since we must take such times as the Great ones please to give us, we necessarily lose a great deal of our own time with them, without producing any, or at least very little Fruit; whereas with the

Poor

2. Cor. 8. 9.

John. 3. 2.

Eccli. 13. 2.

Poor, we advance much in a short time, because with them, one may presently come to the matter, and to the most essential point without any ceremonies. Wherefore those that are truly disabus'd of the world, and have a mind to make a great progress in Vertue, and to produce great fruit in Souls, prefer Circuits before Residences, and do avoid all they can, the meddling with great Persons; looking upon such as a burden too heavy for them, according to the words of the Wise-Man, *He shall take upon him a Burden, who treats with one more honourable than himself.* Do we not also see, that those amongst us, who apply themselves to hear the Confessions of Poor people, are much esteem'd for it, and with a great deal of reason? For you may be assur'd, the Rich will never want Confessors; and if at any time you should judge, that there were any one amongst them to take care of, the care of whom would be a very important service to God; believe, if you are humble, that another will do it better than yourself, and with less danger to his own conscience. Finally, in the offices of Charity, we ought only to look upon Souls, and to have no regard to the quality and condition of Persons, as the Saints and Masters of spirit advise. Souls alone ought after such a manner to draw our eyes and heart, that we should as willingly take care of a Clown's soul, as of a Lord's; because there is no difference at all to be found in Souls; and as *S. Paul* says, *The servant and the master, the slave and he that is free, are all alike in God's sight.* The Soul of one that is poor and in want of all things, is as much the image of God, the temple of the holy Ghost, the heir of Paradise, a member of *Jesus-Christ*, and cost our Redeemer no less than the Soul of the richest and most powerful Person in the world.

Gal. 3. 28.

O accursed Avarice! Which mak'st this distinction betwixt the Rich and the Poor, so prejudicial to their Salvation, and so  
 little

little conform to the Ministry of the servants of God, flattering and adoring the one, and slighting and neglecting the other. Avoid, O my Soul, this dangerous Snare, which the Devil makes use of to entangle unwary Mortals, dragging them through thorns and prickly shrubs of Temptations, clouds of Faith, remorses of Conscience, and cares that sting them to the Heart, to acquire and preserve a little Wealth; and in the end hangs them, like wicked Judas, between Heaven and Earth, neither permitting them to enjoy the goods of the Earth, nor to attain to those of Heaven. O omnipotent God! rich in doing Mercy, deliver my soul from so horrid a Vice, out of which spring so many disorders and miseries; for I had rather without it, suffer Temporal necessity, than with it, to fall into Eternal.

Against the second Rock, which is Intemperance (with us a National vice) we must arm ourselves against it with so much the greater diligence, by how much the more we perceive ourselves to be expos'd to its Butts; begging perpetually of God to deliver us from the necessities of the Body, and that he will please to weaken in us the base concupiscences of the Flesh; to the end we may preserve for him this his Tabernacle in all purity. For it is fit, he should have little of the Body, who is made to manage and handle the Body of the Son of God. It is fit, he should have small commerce with the Flesh, who knows how to incarnate the living God in his hands. A carnal Soul, ready to sell his Patrimony for a mess of pottage as the unworthy *Esan*, is more fit for Hogs, than the Sanctuary. They heretofore sacrific'd to the Sun without effusion of Wine, and those, who sacrifice to the Master of the Sun, ought to intermarry Sobriety with Chastity, which are ever mutually link'd together. All men truly great, are Sober; and it is utterly to renounce to civility and good manners, to be addicted to the sin of Drunkenness; which, as *S. Ambrose* says, is a *Lib, de Elia*, superfluous Creature in the world. It is the scorn of Nature. *et Jejunio.* A man is no longer a Man, but a Bottle perpetually fill'd and

2. rock Intemperance:

Remedies against it.



and empty'd. He lives like a Butt, which do's nothing but leak, and roll up and down, and when the head thereof is knock'd out, you find nothing but lees and dregs. Wine is a familiar or spirit, which possesses him, and is the milk of *Venus*, which nourishes his Concupiscence. All his life is an interlude, and Drunkenness his tomb, wherein are bury'd all his most precious moveables, Memory, Judgment, Understanding, Offices, Dignities, Health, Wealth, Beauty, Reputation; accompany'd with a countless number of sins, scandals, and loathsome stench. Which made the Wise-Man to say: *Wine is a luxurious thing, and Drunkenness tumultuous: Whosoever is delighted therewith, shall not be Wise.*

Prov. 20. 1.

The temperance and sobriety of the Primitive Christians.

He that would behold the Modesty, which is to be observ'd at the tables of Ecclesiastical men, let him at the least take a Model upon that which *Tertullian* writes in his *Apologetick* of the Primitive Christians. Our Table, says he, has nothing in it, which tastes of sordidness, sensuality, or immodesty; we eat there in proportion, we drink according to the rules of temperance; so much we satiate ourselves as is necessary for men, that mast rise in the Night to offer their prayers to God. We there speak, and converse as in the presence of God, our Hands wash'd, and Candles lighted, every one recites what he knows of holy Scripture, and of his own Conceit, all to the praise of God. Prayer ends the Banquet, as it gave beginning thereto. From the Table we go to the exercise of Modesty, and Honesty: You would say, if you saw us, it were not a Supper we had in hand, but a Lesson of piety. Thus this ancient Father. Now for us to arrive at this point, and to moderate our Appetites as becomes our Character, we must propose to ourselves, to have in our Refections, no other rule but Necessity, no other aim but the Glory of God, and entertainment of the Body for the service

service of the Soul. To which the great *S. Austin* was come, when he said, that after his conversion, he went to Meals, as into an Infirmary to take a Medicine. It is a strange vanity to affect the repute of a good Taste; to set the whole mind to serve that part of the Body, which has least of the mind, and to nourish an esteem which is fed only with the Steam of the Kitchen. Treat not your belly, as *Caligula* did his horse, for he allow'd a Beast (for whom nature intended nothing but oats and hay) Princely delicacies and attendance. And you do the like, if you bestow so much cost and pains to feed your most Sensual part, which the divine Providence wills, should be nourish'd sparingly. Nothing is got by pleasures in the Taste, but a more crazy body, a more close prison of flesh, and a more stinking sepulcher. And therefore the Wise-Man's advice is; *Be not greedy in all feasting, and pour not out thyself upon all meat; for in many meats there shall be infirmity, and greediness shall approach even to choler. Because of surfeits many have Dy'd; but he that is abstinent, shall add Life.* And again: *Watching, and choler, and torment to an unsatiable man; but sleep of health is in a man of spare diet; he shall sleep untill morning, and his Soul with him shall be delighted.* Eccli. 37. 32.

O Sweet Jesus, my beloved Master! Seeing all those that make Profession to follow thee, do glory in crucifying their Flesh with its Vices and Concupiscences, grant that I may mortify mine for thy sake, as thou didst mortify thine for the love of me. By that Thirst which thou suffer'dst on the cross, and by the Gall and Vinegar which they gave thee to drink, I humbly beseech thee to bestow on me a Temperance so perfect, that in eating and drinking I may satisfy my Necessity, not serve my Delight; may disarm my Enemy, weaken my Body, and subject it to the Spirit, the better to be able to undertake glorious enterprises in thy holy Service. Thou hast pleas'd, O sovereign Creator! to infuse into me an immortal Soul, too noble to be enslav'd to a sensual Body. The Beasts exceed not Nature's satisfaction, and shall

shall I, who by thy gracious favour am influ'd with Reason, be less temperate? No, my dear Maker! I will never defile thy holy Word, nor like the miserable *Esau* sell my heavenly Inheritance for a vile Morsel, a mess of Pottage, a momentary Pleasure. But the Rules of Sobriety and temperance shall be the Laws of my Life: that using thy temporal gifts with due temper and moderation, I may one day be fully satiated and inebriated at thy divine Table, furnish'd with eternal delicacies and delights.

2. rock Impurity.

Considerations to preserve us from it.

Prov. 7. 5. 25.

As for the last rock, which is Impurity, the most dangerous of the three, to keep ourselves from falling foul upon it, we must seriously reflect upon that which the Prophet *Isaiah* has in his fifty second Chapter, eleventh Verse: *That they should have their Vessels very clean, who are chosen to bear the Vessels of the Lord.* And for this purpose all the Saints counsel us to avoid the daily and familiar conversation of Women, who are manifest snare of Chastity. *Keep thee,* says the Wise Man *from the strange Woman, and from the forreiner which makes her words sweet. Let not thy mind be drawn away in her ways; neither be thou deter'd with her paths. For she has cast down many wounded, and all the most strong are slain by her. Her house the ways of Hell, penetrating to the inner parts of Death.* Believe me, it is one of the most important points of your carriage in the Mission, to stand well upon your guard in this affair. A Priest, abiding within the limits of Purity, appears in his commerce with men, as an Angel of God; but as soon as he falls into a licentious life, he forakes the dignity of his Character, and goes out from the throne of Majesty, as the unfortunate *Babylonian king*, to feed on hay among Beasts. The Night discovers not more Stars in the heavens, than it opens Eyes on the earth to observe his most secret pleasures, Ears to hearken to them, and Mouths to divulge them through all Provinces. *Shame and ignominy he gathers to himself, and his reproach shall not be blotted out.* He is look'd upon as a  
strange

Prov. 6. 33

Strange Bird, that is newly gon out of his Element; and God permits, that having sold his Soul for Hogs-draff, he should still rest unsatisfy'd, finding each-where a long Web of perplexities, and a rolling Wheel of immortal punishments. To some he serves for matter of mirth, to-others as a shuttle-cock; he gives occasion of tears to few, of indignation to all. Men for him are wounded with jealousy, and Women have they never so little honesty, abhor him; in such sort, that the saying of the Scripture is verify'd in him; *Him that sins against his own Soul who shall justify? And who shall honour him, that dishonours his own Soul?* He lives in a kind of Stupidity of Spirit, in continual indisposition of Body, loss of Reputation, the fable of the world, the object of heavens anger, and earths execration. Behold the just punishment of a faithless Soul, which from the bed of Wolves goes out to find the Lamb, and carries the Pollutions of the earth to the Sanctuary of the living God. For the rest, call to mind what has been said in the XI. Chapter, and happily ponder in your heart, what the life of a Priest and Missioner ought to be, who is the Minister of *Jesus-Christ*, the Trumpet of the Gospel, the Oracle of truth; who is the house of God, of the cabinet, and as it were of the bosom of God. To think a wickedness, is a Crime; to commit it, a Sacrilege; to bear it to the Altar, is a sin which has no proper name; O how pure should that Mouth be, which approaches to kiss the Son of God! O how clean should those Hands be, which are chosen to purge away the worlds ordures! O how chaste should that Heart be, which is bedew'd with the blood of the Word Eternal!

Eccles. x. 32.

O, who will give me so perfect a Chastity, as to be worthy to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes! O glorious Angels, you Guardians of virgins, Protectors of the chaste, friends and companions to all such as desire to be pure; come, and fa-

Z xz ij

your

vour me with your assistance; disperse the flames that burn within my mortal Flesh, that they may not touch, nor damnify my Spirit; and negotiate for me the gentle blasts of divine grace, to cool and refresh the ardors of my corrupt nature. And thou (O my Soul) to eschew the flames of this Fire, consider well the scorching and everlasting flames of Hell: For as one Nail drives forth another, so, the fear of these shall expel from thee the love of those.

The Honour  
of the church  
a powerful  
motive to ex-  
cite Missio-  
ners to the  
discharge of  
their Duty.

Now to conclude this subject of Missions, consider with all this, to animate yourself still more to the discharge of your Duty; how the Church stretches out her arms, and entreats you will not suffer her Laurels to wither in your hands, to defile her Victories, nor eclipse her Lights. She has seen many miseries, many has she born, many vanquish'd; but never felt any wounds more dolorous than those, which fell upon her by Vice, Ignorance, and the Negligence of her Pastors. That is it, which has open'd the gate to Heresies, which has fomented Infidelities, enlarg'd Impiety, dispos'd the brows of the wicked to Impudence, the tongue to Slander, the hands to Rapine, which has darken'd the present times with horrible confusions, and which vomits upon the times and ages of Posterity. Will you increase these calamities, and instead of converting your dear Country to the Faith, with your corruption make a bridge for the Faithless to extirpate the remainder of the Catholick Religion therein? For that perhaps shall be the last Scourge, which God will use to punish the jealousies and animosities of our Clergy, the abuses of evil Missioners, the sins of the People in general, and the licentious lives of the Nobility and Gentry in particular, so much degenerated at this day from the piety and zeal of their Catholick Ancestors.

O God of dreadful Majesty! whose Judgments are righteous, and Counsels unsearchable; who visitest the iniquities of Parents upon their Children, to the third and fourth generation, and yet

yet at length remember'st mercy. Forgive, we beseech thee, the **Sins** of our Fore-fathers, and turn away thy wrath from their **Posterity**. Mercifully look down from Heaven upon the tears of **poor afflicted Catholicks**, who groan under the yoke of Persecution, and upon the blood of so many Martyrs, who have spent their lives, and suffer'd death, to convert us to thee. Impart also to our Pastors thine abundant grace for the discharge of their **Duty**. Remove from the Nation all **Perfidiousness, Discord and Rebellion**, all **Drunkennes, Gluttony, Pride, Prophaness, Infidelity and Atheism**; that our Island may once again become a flourishing Seminary of religion; and be restor'd to that unity of **Mind, Reddiness of Faith, tranquillity of Conscience, and holiness of Life**, which is no where to be sought but in the communion of thy Church, nor possible to be found but by the conduct of thy Grace.

**S. VIII. To these.]** To the fore-going Precepts of the Rule adding one more. *I enjoin the Ministers.]* The General and Provincials: *Under Obedience.]* Under strict obligation of Sin. *That they ask.]* That they endeavour to procure, either by Themselves, or by the Procurator of the order, or by any other Person commission'd to petition the same in their, or the orders Name; which Being done, they have discharged their obligation, though his Holiness should not grant their Request. *Of our Lord the Pope.]* Who is in a particular manner the supream Head and chief Superiour of this Fraternity, by means of the special vow of Obedience made to him by our holy Founder, in the name of all his Brethren present and to come. And therefore we *Frier-Minors*, by our Profession, are the Popes own proper Children, and Subjects immediately depending upon him; and consequently exempt from the jurisdiction of Bishops, and of all other ecclesiastical Prelates whatsoever. In such sort, that we cannot yield this Obedience, due to himself alone, to any others that are not of the body of the Order, without his special leave and commission.

*He shall set his Children under her Covering, and shall abide under her Boughs: He shall be protected under her covering from the Heat, and shall rest in her Glory. Eccli. 24. 26.*  
**S. Francis's** order by its institute immediately subject to the Pope.

To the Cardinal-Protector, as his Delegate.

One of the Cardinals of the holy Roman Church. } To be deputed by his said Holiness, as his Delegate, and next after himself, ordinary Superiour of the Order; to whom we may have an easy and speedy access, without troubling the Pope with our affairs, taken up with the more important concerns of the universal Church of God. *For the Governor, Protector, and Corrector of this Fraternity.* } To perform these Offices in the name and by the authority of the Popes Holiness, when ever Prudence and Justice shall require the same, without interfering with subordinate Superiours, or troubling the government of the General, Provincials, and Guardians, in the exercise of their respective Charges; unless some weighty Cause, manifest Injustice, or notable Defect on the said Superiours parts, should oblige his Eminence to interpose his Authority. He says, *Governour*; by ruling and directing the Fraternity in what concerns the observation of the Rule. *Protector*; by defending it from its Adversaries, espousing its Interests, maintaining its Privileges. *Corrector*; by punishing the general defects and abuses committed therein; leaving particular faults and disorders to the respective Superiours, who are best acquainted with their own Subjects, their qualities, conditions, and other circumstances necessary to correct them according to Justice.

The Reasons which mov'd our H. F. to injoyn his Ministers the petitioning of a Cardinal Protector for his order. *Opusc. Tom. 3. Collat. 20.*

But to understand yet more distinctly the office of a Protector, and the benefit which the Order receives thereby, we will here briefly deliver the chief reasons, which mov'd S. Francis to enjoin his Ministers the presenting such a request to the Pope's Holiness, which he has left in writing express'd in these following Terms. „ The Mother of all Churches, says he, is the Church „ of Rome, and the Mistress of all religions. I will go, and „ recommend my Brethren to this holy Church; by the

power

power of whose Rod, malicious men shall be struck and  
 „ abash'd, and the sons of God enjoy full liberty for the  
 „ increase of their eternal Salvation. From hence her Children  
 „ will understand the sweet benefit of their Mother, and be  
 „ excited with a special Devotion always to imbrace her ve-  
 „ nerable foot-steps. Under her protection, there will be no  
 „ evil rencounter in the Order, and the sons of *Belial* shall  
 „ not be permitted to pass unpunish'd through the Vineyard  
 „ of our Lord. The holy Church herself will emulate and  
 „ stand up for the preeminence of our Evangelical Poverty,  
 „ and will not suffer the glory of our Humility to be ob-  
 „ scured by the cloud of Pride. She will preserve intire the  
 „ bonds of Peace and Charity amongst us, striking such as  
 „ breed Discord with a severe censure. In her presence Evan-  
 „ gelical Purity shall flourish, and the odour of good Life  
 „ she will not suffer to fade even for a moment. Thus far  
 our holy Father.

From whose discourse, and from the following text of  
 the Rule, it appears, what our holy Founder's principal de-  
 sign was in the institution of the office of a Cardinal Pro-  
 tector, and the great advantage his Order may derive from  
 thence. Which the more effectually, and orderly to procure,  
 the Authority of the said Cardinal ( which yet may be re-  
 strain'd, or enlarg'd according to the Pope's pleasure, whose  
 Substitute he is ) extends itself at present, according to the  
 Decrees of *Gregory IX. Sixtus IV. Julius II.* to  
 these three Cases; To wit, of a universal or general  
*Relaxation* of religious discipline, of *Schism*, and of  
*Heresy*; which three are expressly mention'd in his com-  
 mission, as the principal points of his Charge; the oe-  
 conomy and government of the Order as to all other parti-  
 culars remaining intirely at the disposition of the ordinary Pre-  
 lates;

The Office of  
 a Cardinal-  
 Protector  
 wherein it  
 consists



Undue Appeals to him forbid.

lates; to whom therefore the Brethren are to have recourse, being by their rule and profession immediately subject to them. Which order, those proud and unmortify'd Spirits do notably invert to their own Damnation, who, to colour their malicious designs, and frustrate their particular Superiours commands, withdraw their necks from the yoke of ordinary Obedience, and have recourse immediately to the Cardinal - Protector; imposing upon his Eminence, and deluding him at a distance with false semblances, and pretexts of I know not what oppressions and injustices done them, to the great disturbance and scandal of Religion, and the confusion of lawful Authority. To prevent which, and stop up the gate to all such Impostors and disobedient refractory Subjects, the fore-said Popes have strictly forbid the Brethren to have recourse, and likewise the Protectors to admit any such undue Appeals, or to meddle in the particular affairs of the Superiours of the order, or to change their constitutions; ordaining, that whatsoever they shall do in the like cases, to be invalid and of no effect; the nature and condition of all sage government requiring a due Subordination, and that the higher Prelates enter not into the Provinces of the lower, but upon very urgent and extraordinary occasions, and in such cases only as exceed the power of these to manage, so to avoid Confusion. But where Appeals are allow'd, for the good of Religion, or doing justice to an innocent Person, the Brethren are to proceed after the following manner: They must appeal from the Guardians to the Custodes, from the Custodes to the Provincials, from these to the General, from the General to the general Chapter, from this to the Cardinal-Protector, from the Protector to the holy Sea, which is the supream Judge in ecclesiastical affairs, and prime Source of truth and justice in the Church of God.

It remains then, that the Brethren, according to the ordinary course of Affairs, in all matters of Direction and Correction, have recourse to their own Superiours; and to the Cardinal-Protector, chiefly to implore his Patronage and assistance against the adversaries of the Order, of whose Protection the Order will always stand in need, to suppress the disturbers of its publick Peace, to maintain its Privileges, to defend it from the Calumnies and Intrigues of ill-meaning People, and to support its Interests in the courts of *Rome*, and of other Princes; it being of itself poor, weak, feeble, and destitute of all humane succour. This is what Pope *Nicolas III.* gave his Nephew Cardinal *Mathew* to understand, when he consign'd into his hands the Protector-ship, after the following manner couch'd in our Annals. "We commit, says he, to thy charge the Order of the *Frier-Minors*, the most precious Treasure we have, the desire of our Heart, the apple of our ye, to be the *Governour, Protector, and Corrector* thereof. As for the governing part, it stands not much in need of thy Direction, being furnish'd with so many wise, and prudent Persons, that it is sufficiently able to govern itself. Neither is it necessary that thou insist much upon Correction; because among the Brethren things are so order'd, that it is scarce possible there should be any defect on that side. For in the first place, they may have recourse to their Custodes, and from their Custodes to their Provincial Ministers, over whom is the General, and besides that the General Chapter; so that it is not likely such things as want Correction should escape them. But one thing there is wherein they need thy Patronage: They are Weak, and Poor, and many unjustly molest and vex them, against whom they are not able to defend themselves; and therefore lack the arm and strength of a Protector. Behold the principal Point, wherein thy care ought to assist and support them. So far

For what things we are to have recourse to our Cardinal-Protector.

Aaaa this

this sovereign Pastor, as solicitous, you would say, for the little Flock of Saint Francis, as for his whole Fold.

O Lord Jesus, special Founder, Governour, and Protector of this thy Seraphical Order! we render thee all possible thanks, for having so worthily provided for the defence of thy Little ones, & ho destitute of all humane Succour and worldly Interest, wholly put their Trust in thee. Be graciously pleas'd to continue this thy favourable Protection over us to the world's end, according as thou hast promis'd our Order shall remain; so that being shelter'd under the Wings of so eminent a Personage of thy Church, and thereby deliver'd from the hands of our Enemies, we may serve thee without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before thee, all the days of our life.

Luc. i. 74.

My Son, keep  
my words, and  
my Precepts  
hide with thee.  
Son, keep my  
command-  
ments, and  
thou shalt live;  
And my Law  
as the apple of  
thine eye: Bind  
it on thy fin-  
gers, Write it  
in the Tables  
of thy Heart.  
Prov. 7. 1.

*That being.* ] By means of the Authority and Interest of the said Cardinal - Protector; chiefly intended by our holy Founder, as we said, for the three following Cases relating to the generality of the Brethren, to prevent their mischievous effects in the body of the Order. *Always subject and obedient to the feet of the said holy Roman Church.* ] Free from Schism. *Firm in the Catholick Faith.* ] Free from Heresy. *We may observe.* ] Free from Relaxations. *The Poverty, and Humility, and the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus-Christ.* ] After the manner explain'd in the First Chapter. Where, as our holy Founder began his divine Rule, so he here ends it, with obedience to the Church of Rome, and the observation of the Gospel of Jesus-Christ; the Author of our Faith, and Finisher of our Hope, our Alpha and Omega, our Beginning and End. *Which we have firmly promis'd.* ] Solemnly vow'd to God to observe purely, simply, literally, without Dispensation, or Gloss, according to the Popes *Nic. III. and Clem. V.* Declarations. And who-soever shall observe it thus.

He

He shall be replenish'd in Heaven with the  
Blessing of the most high Celestial Father,  
and on Earth with that of his Be-  
loved Son, together with the  
most Holy Spirit the Para-  
clete: To whom be Ho-  
nour and Glory, now  
and for ever more.  
Amen.

*Test. S.F.*















